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THESIS

LEADING MARINES IN A DIGITAL WORLD

by

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March 2013

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LEADING MARINES IN A DIGITAL WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Leadership and communication are essential for winning wars. Email is a reality, and is good for some things; however, there is no substitute for F2F interaction when it comes to building relationships. Relationships are a reality in any organization, but they are more important in an organization like the Marines where lives are on the line. Senior leaders should establish mutually trusting relationships with junior leaders before deploying to a combat zone when it may be too late. Even in the best relationships, and under the influence of a great leader, conflict will occur. Some conflict is healthy, but too much can be detrimental to unity. Marine leaders would do well to implement a comprehensive conflict management strategy in order to maintain unit cohesion and create a safe environment for junior Marines to express their concerns and opinions. Servant-leadership is a comprehensive leadership model that encompasses all necessary attributes for fostering trusting relationships and managing conflict and, therefore, is the most appropriate model for the Marines. Empowering servant-leaders in the Marine Corps will help the Marines enhance their organizational culture and allow them to continue to focus on executing their primary mission: protecting our nation's interest at home and abroad.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AT&T	American Telephone and Telegraph
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMC	Computer Mediated Communication
CNN	Cable News Network
COA	Course of Action
CPR	Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DoD	Department of Defense
eCommerce	Electronic Commerce
Email	Electronic Mail
F2f	Face-to-Face
FDC	Fire Direction Center
fMRI	Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
MCPD	Marine Corps Planning Process
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
OCS	Officer Candidate School
PTSD	Post-traumatic Stress Disorder
U.S.	United States
Wyo	Wyoming

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. MARINE CULTURE

The United States Marine Corps is recognized worldwide as one of, if not the most elite fighting force in the world. During the Korean War, General Douglas MacArthur of the U.S. Army had this to say about the Corps: “I have just returned from visiting the Marines at the front, and there is no finer fighting force in the world” (General Douglas MacArthur, USA, outskirts of Seoul, 21 September 1950). This time honored tradition suffuses in an organizational culture that entices young men and women who want to earn the title of U.S. Marine. During *Making the Corps* (a documentary about Marine Corps boot camp), Thomas E. Ricks, the producer, declared that, “the United States Marine Corps, with its fiercely proud tradition of excellence in combat, its hallowed rituals, and its unbending code of honor, is part of the fabric of American myth” (1997). Ricks’ statement helps clarify why the Marine Corps consistently meets recruiting goals; people want to join and be part of something bigger than themselves by volunteering to serve their country. Ann McGee-Cooper (n.d), an organizational leadership consultant, explained that “people want to be part of something that is going to make the world better...or different.”

Marines are different, and that is a good thing. From the day they arrive at boot camp or officer candidate school (OCS), they are indoctrinated into a different culture; a new way of life. This new way of life teaches them that being part of a team is more important than working alone, and their teammates are more than co-workers, they are family. They are empowered with the tools to be autonomous and think for themselves, and yet, they are trained to always put others before self. In a Public Broadcasting Station (PBS) interview with Jim Lehrer, General Charles Krulak, 31st Commandant of the Marine Corps, was asked about the cultural gap between society and his Marines. General Krulak stated,

I think that there probably is a cultural gap that is recognizable but good. They [Americans] don’t want a Marine Corps that has lowered their standards. They look to us as a breed apart, and so if you talk about a

difference in culture between the Marine Corps and American people that may not be bad. (1999, paragraph 42)

Furthermore, in a separate interview with Fire Chief Ronny J. Coleman (2000), Krulak was praised by Coleman for the Marines' inspiring adherence to tradition. Coleman then asked, "How does the Marine Corps balance tradition and the ability to change?" Krulak explained that "people, I think, misunderstand tradition and confuse it with having your feet in granite." The Marines do not have their feet stuck in granite, but they have built a reinforced stone wall around themselves. This wall has protected their organizational culture from heavy external influence for many generations. The issue now is that technology may be creating a fissure in the once indestructible wall of organizational culture built with the blood, sweat, and tears of Marines past and present.

B. THE BATTLEFIELD ENVIRONMENT

1. The New Normal

The battlefield is changing into what I call the new normal. Historically, the Marines have fought large-scale conflicts with a more traditional enemy that wears a uniform and fights in sizeable units (exceptions do exist). The War on Terror is the new normal, and unfortunately, so is the enemy. The enemy is hardly visible, and he fights alone or in small terror cells. He is strapped with a bomb around his waist and buries explosives on the side of the road in the middle of the night. The enemy does not wear a military uniform, which makes him hard to detect until he draws his weapon and aims to kill. Finally, he forces the fight into the small confines of city blocks where he runs from building to building, making him difficult to observe.

The dynamics of the contemporary battlefield have caused the Marine Corps to decentralize command and delegate decision-making authority down as far as the strategic corporal. Over the course of the past century, the Marine Corps has gone away from centralized command and control as its primary means of leading Marines. Recognizing the need to empower young leaders, General Krulak, coined the phrase strategic corporal. This concept is based on the level of influence the young non-commissioned officer (NCO) has acquired on the battlefield in the past twelve years. In

light of the relentless 24-hour media cycle, decisions the corporal makes on the battlefield are highly publicized, and scrutinized, and may have strategic level implications for all coalition forces in the theater of operations. Krulak (1999) explained that this young leader will have been asked to exercise an exceptional degree of maturity, restraint, and judgment. In an interview with Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Arthur P. Bill Jr., Krulak (1998) described the “power down” concept:

In World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, the young Marine could be the world’s greatest hero, but he really had no strategic impact. In future wars, tremendous capability and lethality will be in the hands of the young corporal. Combine that with the immediate “CNN effect,” and it turns some of those actions into strategic actions. That young NCO needs to be highly trained because what he does or fails to do may literally impact national policy. (Paragraph 13)

2. Technology and communication

In America we live in an era dominated by technology and progress. The ease of use and availability of the Internet is the largest contributing factor affecting how the Marine Corps communicates. Speaking from experience, in the late 1990s there were only a few computers in each company more than 120 Marines. In an infantry unit, there were two or three computers, and all five officers would share them; the enlisted had one or two for use by 115 Marines. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 1997 only 22.2% of Americans over the age of eighteen owned a computer and used the Internet. The Internet was well established by 1997, but the Marine Corps fought the culture shift in order to maintain face-to-face (F2F) as their primary mode of communication for an additional three to four years. In the early part of the new millennium, the days of meeting F2F were slowly drifting away. Marines were ordered to check email accounts at least twice throughout the working day to see if any important information was disseminated. The U.S Census Bureau reports that by the year 2010, 81.4% of households owned a computer or handheld device with Internet access. This paradigm shift significantly reduces much valued F2F time between junior and senior Marines and is an immediate threat to the organizational culture.

Communication has been one of the biggest challenges with the contemporary battlefield and leading the strategic corporal. When senior leaders are not co-located with subordinate Marines, communication can break down and form a chasm between what is said and what is understood. This chasm can be bridged by building trusting relationships up and down the chain-of-command and having a strategy in place to handle conflict. For Marines, these two characteristics of leadership are of the utmost importance on the battlefield. Senior leaders have to be able to trust junior leaders to carry out the mission, and junior leaders should be able to trust that the commander has the Marines' best interest in mind. Additionally, when conflict arises, leaders should be able to manage conflict and allow everyone to reengage in accomplishing the mission. These two salient leadership principles should be established prior to deploying overseas and engaging a live enemy, implying that ample time and effort should be invested in building trust and managing conflict at every available opportunity.

Communication in this hi tech world is increasingly done via email, which consequently affects the style of leadership that was once so coveted in the Corps. Communication is the foundation for building trusting relationships and many Marine officers have to relearn this core competency to create and foster the ability to effectively communicate in a digital world. Today, leadership by email is a common heartache for leaders throughout the Marine Corps because all leaders have to deal with it at some point in their daily routine. Experience tells me that nearly all officers' desire in their heart to personally know each Marine charged to their care, but there are not enough hours in the day. Because the Internet allows information to travel at extremely high speeds, this causes more work, not less, as many Marines had hoped. Further, the volume of communication with Marines is not the problem; in fact, some argue there is too much communication. The problem is how the communication is being handled or conducted. Email is good for some things, but when something must be unquestionably understood, there is no substitute for F2F communication because there is an opportunity to ask questions and receive immediate feedback. In order for effective communication to occur, I suggest that the Marines should alter the way in which they lead, communicate, and interact with other Marines both vertically and horizontally in the chain-of-command.

This thesis explores evidence for the most effective form of communication (either F2F or email) to use in a variety of situations, which will help Marine leaders delegate authority with confidence and clarity. In order to accomplish this goal, the leader should do three things that are discussed in great detail: (a) serve and care for those charged to his or her care, thereby affording him or her the opportunity to (b) form and cultivate mutually trusting relationships, consequently, allowing for an effective and comprehensive conflict management strategy to (c) be adopted and employed within the organization. The remainder of this chapter focuses on why leadership is important, provides a definition of leadership, and finally, describes which philosophy of leadership is the most appropriate for leading in this digital era.

C. LEADERSHIP DEFINED

Leadership is critical for the transformation of any organization. This simple, yet resolute statement is the foundation upon which this thesis is built. Similarly, leadership expert John Maxwell displays on his website homepage: “Everything rises and falls on leadership” (Maxwell, 2013). Harvard Business School professor and author of *True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership* (2007), Bill George (2003) explained that organizations need leaders who lead with purpose, values, and integrity. Furthermore, we need leaders who build enduring organizations, motivate their employees to provide superior customer service, and create long-term value for shareholders. Maxwell (2012) taught that the highest function of a leader is not just to lead others; the highest function of a leader is to produce leaders who are capable of leading others. He highlighted that leadership is not an exclusive club reserved for those who were born with the ability to lead. The traits comprising the raw materials of leadership can be acquired. Once people have the internal drive to lead married with the acquired skills, Maxwell said, nothing can keep you from becoming a leader. Bruce Avolio (2009), leadership researcher and practitioner, and his associates, explained that the fundamental issue for leadership scholars and practitioners to address is how technology is transforming the traditional roles of leadership at both individual and organizational levels by investigating how existing leadership styles and cultures embedded in a group or organization affect the appropriation of advanced information technology systems.

Great leaders are the cement that holds the Marine Corps together. They accomplish the mission no matter what the cost, and they look out for the brother or sister to their left and right. For the past 237 years, the Marines have been continuously engaged in skirmishes ranging from sandy beach landings during the Battle of Derne in Tripoli in 1805 to more recently fighting in the urban jungle of Iraq (2003–2012). No matter what the environment, Marines have continued to demonstrate the ability to adapt and overcome any situation. Peter, Ioannis, Moschos, and Richard (2012) summed up the importance of leadership in durable organizations this way: “What is necessary in order for any organization to be successful in the long run is good management and good leadership,” and they believe most everything else will fall in line if these two items exist in the organization. The reputation of the Marines is an indicator they have exceptional leadership (and management) capabilities.

In the most general sense, a leader is a person who influences others to accomplish a mission. The battlefield is changing, the way people communicate is changing, and now the way Marines lead is changing. This change is necessary for leaders to keep up with the times. General James Amos, current Commandant of the Marine Corps, recognized this requirement and suggested in his Marine Corps Vision and Strategy 2025 that, “to remain the nation’s force in readiness, the Marine Corps must continuously innovate. This requires that we look across the entire institution and identify areas that need improvement and effect positive change.” The strategic corporal requires a leader who emphasizes building a trusting relationship as well as a leader who seeks to implement a healthy conflict management strategy when points of view do not match up seamlessly. This is a far cry from the Corps’ previous philosophy of autocratic hierarchical leadership that paved the way for two centuries. Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009) explained that very recently, leadership studies have moved away from a strong emphasis on academically accepted models such as transformational leadership and are now headed toward a focus on a shared, relational, and global perspective where the interaction between leader and follower are key elements. The Marine Corps’

strategic corporal stands to benefit from an updated leadership philosophy. First, I discuss two very important characteristics common to all leaders, the fact that leaders have influence and power.

Leaders have influence. Nazari and Emami (2012) defined leadership as the process of having dominance on group activities in order to realize the objectives. To execute the leadership task, managers try to influence the people under their supervision and motivate and direct them to achieve the organizational objectives. Harry A. Oliver described the spirit of leadership as using one's influence in order to get others to participate (as cited in Maxwell, 2012). There are two ways a person may acquire influence, position and merit. The two can coexist within a single leader, which is ideal, especially in a highly organized hierarchy like the Marines.

Leaders have power. Rank structure exists in the Marines to demonstrate a clear division of authority and power based on time in grade, time in service, and performance evaluations. When an officer joins the ranks of the Marine Corps he or she is automatically given a certain level of legitimate power. Legitimate power was explained by Raven and French (1958) as "a relationship between offices rather than between persons." Furthermore, they illustrated this point by describing a situation where a factory worker accepts the right of his supervisor to hold his position, and that supervisor will, by virtue of this occupancy, have the legitimate right to prescribe behavior for his worker; the worker will, in turn, feel obligated to accept these orders.

Often a young lieutenant checks into his first fleet unit with a considerable amount of responsibility and very limited practical knowledge. This is where the officer will take one of two approaches to the newly acquired power and influence. He can either use his position to throw his weight around, or he can yield to doing the best he can and earn respect the hard way. Ideally, he will choose referent power, which is defined as "influence based on affect and feelings of personal acceptance, are the same in that they both depend on an interpersonal attraction and appeal that one individual has for another. A follower identifies with the leader's personal qualities" (Kudisch et al.,1995).

In today's work environment, the study of leadership places less emphasis on the leader as the lead actor and now considers the entire cast and crew. Avolio et al. (2009) explained that today, the field of leadership focuses not only on the leader, but also on followers, peers, supervisors, work setting and context, and culture, including a much broader array of individuals. The whole organization from the janitor to the CEO represents the diverse set of characters that are accountable to one another for the success or failure of the organization. Leadership is no longer simply described as an individual characteristic or difference, but rather is depicted in various models [such] as dyadic, shared, relational, strategic, global, and a complex social dynamic (Avolio, 2009).

There are several leadership models that satisfy the Commandant's vision to train young leaders like the strategic corporal. All eight models contribute good components, but the best grounding model is servant-leadership. The servant-leader puts the leader in the right frame of mind generally, and he can draw on the insights from these other models. The eight models: (1) transformational leadership, (2) authentic leadership, (3) Level 5 leadership, (4) empowering leadership, (5) self-sacrificing leadership, (6) shared leadership, (7) leader-member exchange, and (8) servant-leadership. The following sections provide a brief summary of each theory and offer insight as to how each is a piece of the leadership puzzle. Servant-leadership provides the missing pieces as I discuss in the next chapter.

1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is forward-looking and holistic. Where transactional leadership is concerned with the day-to-day operations, transformational leaders are concerned with the future of the organization and the employees. Transformational leaders focus on casting vision, inspiring others, setting the example, and showing care and concern for employees. Transformational leadership is "a leadership style with explicit attention to the development of followers through individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and supportive behavior...[where] the primary allegiance of transformational leaders is to the organization" (Graham, 1991).

A risk one assumes with the transformational leadership model is the opportunity for manipulation. At their core, transformational leaders are helping others grow personally and professionally, but the problem is allegiance. The transformational leader's primary concern is the organization and therefore it is a logical question to ask whether he wants his people to perform well for the benefit of the organization. Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) explained that, "the transformational leader has a greater concern for getting followers to engage in and support organizational objectives." Another pitfall, according to Robbins and Judge (2012), is that it may not be the appropriate in all situations. They explained that transformational leadership is better suited for small private companies than for complex organizations with an intricate bureaucratic structure, in this case, the Marine Corps. They stated that transformational leadership works better in an organization where the leader can interact personally with employees and make decisions rather than reporting to a board of directors. The Marine Corps is structured as a hierarchy with a clearly defined chain-of-command, which supports the idea that transformational leadership is not the best option for implementation in the Marines.

2. Authentic Leadership

Authentic leaders have an understanding of who they are and what constitutes their core values. They are willing to stand up for those core values, and as a result, they are considered ethical people who are renowned for building trusting relationships. Transformational leaders cast vision and inspire, but without ethics and trust to back up it up, the leader has little influence with followers. Robbins and Judge (2012) explained that past studies have given us greater understanding of leadership methods and styles, but authentic leadership, with its focus on ethics and trust, helps complete the leadership picture. Luthans and Avolio (2003) claimed that authentic leadership is "a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development." Avolio, Luthans, and Walumbwa (2004) depicted authentic leaders as "those who are intensely aware of how they think and behave, and they are perceived by others as being aware of

their own and others' values, knowledge, and strengths." Furthermore, authentic leaders exhibit self-confidence, demonstrate a high level of moral character, and are keenly aware of the environment in which they function. The other half of the equation is ethics, defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making" (Brown, Trevino, & Harrison, 2005). When others perceive the leader to be ethical, this is considered appropriate behavior, and therefore the leader will be viewed as an authentic and trustworthy example. In summary, the authentic and ethical leader is viewed as one who is capable of making fair and justified decisions and is trusted to behave in such a manner that sets a positive example for others to follow.

There is no argument that authentic leadership focuses on ideas that overlap with servant-leadership; the issue is where the two theories do not overlap. The authentic leadership model is a broad and comprehensive philosophy; the primary characteristic of authentic leadership is an expression of one's true self (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). According to van Dierendonck (2011), Associate professor at Rotterdam School of Management, servant-leadership and authentic leadership overlap with only two characteristics, which are humility and authenticity. He proposes that none of the other elements of servant-leadership are measured as a component of authentic leadership. Authentic leadership, with its many great qualities does not encompass the characteristics that the Marines need to effectively lead Marines.

3. Level 5 Leadership

Level 5 leaders are called to be humble; that is what sets this model apart from other leadership philosophies. According to Collins (2001), the Level 5 leader "builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical combination of personal humility plus professional will." Collins further explained that in his study he theorized that great leaders would focus on vision first, but he quickly discovered that the great leaders were attending to the needs of their people first and then to the strategy of the organization second. Collins used the analogy of a bus. He said that Level 5 leaders get the right

people on the bus and remove the people who do not belong. Once all the right people are on the bus, they must be ushered to the right seat. Now that the right people are in the right seats, it is time to begin driving the bus in the right direction. Collins said that Level 5 leaders can be identified by the way they look to self when blame is to be assumed, and they look to others when praise is to be awarded.

It is abundantly clear that Level 5 leadership overlaps with servant-leadership in humility. This is an important characteristic for a leader to demonstrate, but there is more to the equation. Collins in his book, *Good to Great* (2001), used the following as a metric to determine which companies went from good to great: “The company’s fifteen-year cumulative stock returns had to be at or below the general stock market, punctuated by a transition point, and then cumulative returns had to be at least three times the market value over the next fifteen years.”

Additionally, Level 5 leadership, according to van Dierendonck (2011), is more focused on organizational success and less on developing followers. He highlighted that characteristics like stewardship, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance are evidently missing from the definition of Level 5 leadership. This, van Dierendonck said, should not be a shocking revelation given that in Collins study, shareholder value in terms of stock returns was the decisive factor for companies to meet the requirements as a good to great company. In summary, there is no conclusive empirical evidence as to whether or not Level 5 leadership would be appropriate for the Marines.

4. Empowering Leadership

Empowering leaders are looking to cultivate the next generation of leaders by allocating power and decision-making authority to team members. The motivation behind empowering leadership can be traced back to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) and goal-setting theory (Erez & Arad, 1986). These two motivation theories work in concert with one another (Robbins & Judge, 2012), enabling the employee to work toward setting their own lofty goals and believing they can accomplish them. The whole process is initiated by the empowering leader setting challenging goals while concurrently affording the freedom to employees to achieve those goals. As self-efficacy increases, the team

member will feel qualified to set his own ambitious goals and is empowered by having the latitude to make the requisite decisions necessary to accomplish the goals. It is important to note that in empowering leadership, “the employee’s perspective and the leader’s actions to involve others in decision making are regarded as central” (van Dierendonck, 2011).

Empowering leadership overlaps with servant-leadership in the aspect of empowering individuals. The Marines would benefit greatly from the basic reception of empowerment, as this would encourage autonomy and allow the strategic corporal freedom to set goals and make decisions. Van Dierendonck (2011) proposes that servant-leadership and empowering leadership theories are closely related at the core; however, servant-leadership elaborates on empowering leadership. Servant-leadership encompasses all of the characteristics of empowering but also includes others that empowering does not have, like giving back to the community. Community is especially important to Marine leadership because giving back to the community through public relations events such as the Toys for Tots program is instrumental in engaging with the civilian population. Events such as these are an outreach for the Marines and a way to give back to a community and country that support them both in peace and times of war.

5. Self-sacrificing Leadership

Self-sacrificing leaders are willing to put others before self for the good of the organization or group. Self-sacrifice has been defined by Choi and Mai-Dalton (1999) as the “the total/partial abandonment, and/or permanent postponement of personal interests, privileges, or welfare in the division of labor, distribution of rewards, and exercise of power.” The recent emergence of study on self-sacrificial leadership is attributed to Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Both Burns and Bass proposed that self-sacrifice, when accompanied by the right motives, is a tool that exceptional leaders use to motivate others. Self-sacrificing leaders were ascribed charisma by followers and were alleged to be more influential, legitimate, and effective (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005). Because of this, self-sacrificial leaders earn followers’ acceptance as a role model (Bass, 1985) and are admired in the workplace

(Conger, 2000). Consequently, followers of a self-sacrificial leader tend to be more committed to the organization and demonstrate an increase in performance (van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), and have a tendency toward reciprocating the self-sacrificing behaviors within their own sphere of influence (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

Self-sacrificing leadership is an offshoot of transformational leadership. Therefore, the same argument applies here as with transformational leadership. Briefly, the self-sacrificing leader, though he puts others before self, is chiefly motivated by organizational goals and success. Matteson and Irving (2005) said it this way: “Contrary to servant-leadership, however, self-sacrificing leadership, with its roots in transformational leadership, focuses primarily on the organization instead of the followers.”

6. Shared Leadership

The shared leadership model empowers others in the group by affording them an opportunity to lead, in order to prepare the next generation of leaders. The intent is to capitalize on the available human capital within the organization by allowing others to maximize their fullest potential. Shared leadership is a newer leadership model that is very dynamic and requires investing a lot of time in people in order to make it work properly. The most widely cited definition of shared leadership is that of Pearce and Conger (2003) who defined shared leadership as “a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both.” Shared leadership differs from more traditional hierarchical leadership models because the goal is to empower the team to learn how to share leadership within the group in order to better serve the organization. The influence process involves both vertical (peers) and horizontal (hierarchical) influence as it can shape the operational environment in which is practiced. One unique facet of shared leadership is that influence tends to be reciprocated in most relationships.

The issue with shared leadership is the primary focus. Contained in the definition of shared leadership is the notion that empowering member of the group is for the benefit

of the group and/or organization. The Marines would do well with a leadership philosophy such as shared leadership; however, servant-leaders focus on serving the Marine first and the organization second. This concept is more appropriate for building trusting relationships.

7. Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory says that the leader will choose who he wants to be the next leader because he does not have the time to invest in everyone in the group. In many ways, this is the antithesis to empowering and shared leadership. The central principle in LMX theory is that leaders develop different exchange relationships with their followers, whereby the quality of the relationship alters the impact on important leader and member outcomes (Gerstner & Day, 1997). LMX leadership occurs when leaders and followers have developed real relationships that result in reciprocated and increasing influence. Basically, over time, LMX allows for leaders to exert more influence over followers based on a well-established mutually beneficial relationship. LMX leaders pick and choose who the next leader will be. The LMX style leader establishes both an “in” group and an “out” group, and all group members are placed into one of these two categories. Robbins and Judge (2012) wrote that it is not exactly clear how leaders determine who goes into which group; however, they suggest that attitude, demographic and similar personality characteristics are heavily considered. A benefit to LMX, Ozer (2008) reported, is that members of the “in” group demonstrate higher levels of work performance and attitudes when they are allowed autonomy and more internal locus of control.

LMX does not overlap with servant-leadership. All Marines are trained to be leaders. According to Marine Corps protocol, all Marines have the same opportunities afforded to them. They all have the same shot at the same promotions, and LMX would not prepare many of them for the next level. In an infantry unit, there is a natural progression for many Marines. At the rank of corporal, there are nine team leaders in charge of three other men. At sergeant, there are three squad leaders in charge of twelve other men. At staff sergeant, there is one who is in charge of up to forty men. There is no

place in the Marine Corps for LMX to be a viable option as a leadership philosophy; the Marine Corps needs all their Marines prepared to lead.

8. Servant-leadership

Servant-leadership is grounded firmly on the principle that “the Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead” (Greenleaf, 1977; as cited in Beazley, Beggs, & Spears, 2003). A distinguishing feature is defining one’s leadership by service to others and not the other way around. Patterson (2003) identified servant-leaders as those leaders who lead an organization by focusing on their followers, such that the followers are the primary concern and the organizational concerns are secondary. Reinke (2004) explained that in order to truly understand servant-leadership it is important to realize that the leader is “*primus inter pares*” (i.e., first among equals), who does not use his power to get things done but who tries to persuade and convince others. Van Dierendonck (2011) wrote that servant-leadership is demonstrated by empowering and developing others; being humble and authentic; achieving social acceptance, and accepting stewardship; and by providing direction and a vision. The relationship between leader and follower is a high-quality connection, where trust and treating others fairly are considered to be extremely important in order to inspire self-actualization, positive job attitudes, performance, and a stronger organizational focus on sustainability and corporate social responsibility (van Dierendonck, 2011).

Russell and Stone (2002) broke down servant-leadership into two comprehensive categories of attributes: functional and accompanying. Functional attributes include having vision; being honest, trustworthy, and service oriented; a role model; demonstrating appreciation of others’ service; and empowerment. In terms of accompanying attributes, servant-leaders are described as good communicators and listeners, credible, competent, encouraging of others, teachers, and delegators. Avolio, Walumba, and Weber (2009) explained that there is limited empirical research on servant-leadership; however, the studies that have been conducted conclude that servant-leadership is “positively related to follower satisfaction, job satisfaction, intrinsic work satisfaction, caring for the safety of others, and organizational commitment.”

Of all the models of leadership, servant-leadership is the best grounding model for the purposes of this thesis and, more specifically, for leading Marines. While the other leadership models discussed here contain important aspects of leadership, none of them is sufficient on their own. Servant-leadership, however, combines all the major components from the other leadership models; servant-leaders are forward-looking (transformational leadership), stand up for their core values (authentic leadership), are humble (Level 5 leadership), empower everyone in the group (empowering and shared leadership), are willing to sacrifice self for others (self-sacrificing leadership), and make the time to invest in all group members thereby placing them in the “in” group (unlike LMX). One major characteristic that sets servant-leadership apart from the group is the intense focus on the human aspect. The servant-leader feels accomplishment when his group members succeed. Furthermore, his desire is to develop and maintain mutually trusting relationships that endure through time and extend beyond the confines of the operational environment. The servant-leader’s focus is people. The Marine Corps teaches that the focusing on the individual Marine is vitally important because the Marine Corps believes it is the Marine who wins wars and provides freedom, not the tank, missile, or aircraft.

D. LEADERSHIP DEFINED FOR THIS THESIS

Drawing from Greenleaf’s model of servant-leadership, I define leadership in this thesis as follows: A leader is a servant who, by serving, encourages others to “become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely to become leaders themselves” (Greenleaf, 1977). The leader strives to inspire growth in those he or she serves and allows them to realize their greatest potential. He or she lives their life, personally and professionally, as an example for others to emulate. Finally, a leader who serves well above all else, puts others before self in all matters.

II. SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

A. FATHER OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP: ROBERT K. GREENLEAF

Robert K. Greenleaf spent most of his career in the field of management, research, development, and education at AT&T. He retired as the Director of Management Research at AT&T after an illustrious career spanning more than forty years. During his four-decade tenure, he observed both good managers and bad managers. Greenleaf, who enjoyed observing people, noticed something different about the successful managers. He studied them carefully, and he began to see that they led differently than many of the other leaders. Over time, he began to understand what set them apart. It was the way they cared for their teams and the individuals who comprised those teams. They accomplished their short-term goals, but they focused intensely on the long-term development of the people in their teams. They did not chastise people for making mistakes, and they would use every trial as an opportunity to mentor, coach, and develop the judgment and decision-making ability of their team members. Greenleaf appreciated that successful managers listened more than their peers, and they gave significantly fewer commands. When they asked tough questions, they did so with the intent to look at the problem from all angles and not to make the other person look like a fool.

Robert Greenleaf is credited with coining the phrase “servant-leadership” in his Seminole work, *The Servant as Leader* (1970). The words *servant* and *leader* are usually thought of as being contrary, and therefore, the term *servant-leadership* appears at face value to be at odds with traditional leadership philosophies. In deliberately bringing those two words together in a significant way, Greenleaf invented the paradox now recognized as servant-leadership. Over the course of the next few years, Greenleaf would liberally apply this term to businesses, churches, and educational institutions. In 1977, after the term was recognized in the field of academia, Greenleaf published a book entitled *Servant-leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. He also published other books on the subject of servant-leadership over the course of his

illustrious career. The Greenleaf Institute published, or subsequently republished *Seeker and Servant* in 1996, *On Becoming a Servant Leader* in 1996, and *The Power of Servant-leadership* in 1998.

Greenleaf did not accept full credit for coining the phrase servant-leadership; he pointed to Hermann Hesse as the source from whom he first conceived the idea. Larry Spears, President and CEO of the Greenleaf Institute from 1990 to 2007, said, “The idea of the servant as leader came partly out of Greenleaf’s half century of experience...However, the event that crystallized Greenleaf’s thinking came in the 1960’s, when he read Hermann Hesse’s short novel *Journey to the East*” (Beazley, Beggs, & Spears, 2003) This book impacted his life in such a way that it literally changed the way he approached leadership.

In *Journey to the East* (1956), the travelers profit from, and grow dependent on their servant Leo, the man “who does their menial chores, sustains them with his spirit and his songs, and, by the quality of his presence lifts them above what they otherwise would be” (Beazley et al., 2003). Leo, however, disappears, leaving the group in confusion, and they begin to panic, which eventually leads to the breakup of the assembly. They cannot seem to make the journey without their servant. Several years later, the narrator of the story, who was a former member of the deprived traveling group, encounters Leo and discovers that he is the actually the head of the group that sponsored the journey. Leo was the guiding light and a wonderful illustration of a servant leader. Spears (2003) wrote that Leo plays two different roles at the same time, and those roles are seen as opposing in when measured against our culture. Spears continued, “the servant who, by acting with integrity and spirit, builds trust and lifts people and helps them grow, and the leader who is trusted and who shapes others’ destinies by going out ahead to show the way.”

It was from this story that Greenleaf developed the idea that service to others precedes leadership. Greenleaf (1970) said, “It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”

B. SERVANT-LEADERSHIP FROM AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE

There are literally hundreds of leadership styles, methods, and philosophies that have been appropriately studied and validated; however, the leadership style I focus on in this thesis is servant-leadership because I believe it places the most emphasis on serving the needs of others. Servant-leadership incorporates the principles of empowerment, total quality, team building, participatory management, and the service ethic into a single leadership philosophy (Shekari & Nikooparyar, 2012). This model of leadership stresses increased service to others and a holistic approach to work while promoting a sense of community that allows for sharing of authority in the decision-making process. It is this fundamental attitude of wanting to serve others that influences how leaders interact with followers and how they carry out the duty of leadership. Some concepts of leadership focus on being value or character-driven and task or process oriented. Servant-leaders must be value and character-driven people who are performance and process oriented. Leaders who pay attention to these altruistic pro-social behaviors are the leaders who will witness an increase in organizational performance (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006).

There are other scholars who argue for the effectiveness of servant-leadership. In an empirical study on servant-leadership, Ehrhart (2004) demonstrated that servant leader behaviors appeared to be antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior. One major idea appears to be constant in the literature associated with organizational citizenship behavior, and that was summarized by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach (2000): “out of four types of leader behaviors explained in path goal theory—supportive, directive, participative, and achievement oriented—the supportive behaviors were the strongest antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior.” Bateman and Organ (1983) theorized that the reason behind this is that leaders who support their subordinates enhance organizational citizenship because they “lubricate the social machinery of the organization.”

Servant-leadership differs from other models of leadership because it focuses on leaders meeting the needs of followers. This is illustrated by leaders who treat followers as ends in themselves vice a means to an end, which, consequently affords them the

opportunity to reach their potential and perform optimally (McCrimmon, 2010). Leaders play a vital role in helping followers to realize their maximum potential. Servant-leadership focuses on developing employees to their fullest potential in the areas of task effectiveness, community stewardship, self-motivation, and future leadership capabilities (Linden, Wayne, Zhao, & Henderson, 2008). This type of leadership is only comprehensible when leaders value, motivate and respect the people who follow them. Ehrhart (2004) suggested that servant leaders spend quality time developing meaningful relationships, build a sense of community, seek input before making decisions, reach consensus on major decisions, focus on the personal development of employees, demonstrate a democratic relationship with employees, find ways to assist others, and give back to the community.

Many scholars agree that transformational leadership is the closest known relative to servant-leadership. This may be true; however, when studied in depth a couple major differences emerge, making them more like cousins than sisters. One key difference is that transformational leadership's primary concern is performance beyond expectations (Bass, 1985) while the prerequisite of servant-leadership is to focus on the follower and his holistic development. This is important to the Marine Corps because moral reasoning and spiritual development are important aspects of developing the whole Marine. Consequently, servant-leaders depend on relational power that enables post-conventional moral reasoning and spiritual development in followers (Graham, 1995; cf. Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010). In a recent empirical study conducted by Liden et al. (2008), they found that servant-leadership was a theory distinct from transformational leadership. Servant-leader behaviors in their model included showing concern for the interests of others, encouraging others in their career goals, delegating important work responsibilities, and emphasizing the importance of giving back to the community, whereas transformational leadership neglects these constructs.

Traditionally, the Marine Corps has been revered for its command-and-control philosophy of leadership. This is generally where the charismatic leader shines. Robbins and Judge (2012) explained that, "charisma appears most successful when the follower's task has an ideological component or the environment includes a high degree of stress

and uncertainty. When charismatic leaders surface it is likely to be during wartime...or facing a life threatening crises.” As Ebner and O’Connell (2010) argued, the problem with the charismatic leaders is that power is the magnet that attracts these leaders, and most are corrupted and destroyed by power. On the other hand, servant-leaders are more likely to rely on referent power than legitimate authority as a means for interacting with followers. The servant-leadership model calls for leaders to use the power they obtain by rank and position to the advantage of their team, the organization as a whole, and the community in which they operate. Their drive is to use power to enhance the well-being of those they serve rather than to benefit themselves. Servant-leadership petitions leaders to be motivated not by a desire for status and control but by a call to serve, with a primary responsibility to care for those who choose to follow. Greenleaf (1977) summed up that coercive power, by comparison, is not that effective: “Not much that is really important can be accomplished through coercive power.”

Thousands of books and tens of thousands of articles have been written on the subject of leadership. Each offers its own contribution to the library, and each has its time and place where it may be of great use. Often there is a quote or mnemonic for the reader to remember or contemplate in their reflection or meditation time. Leadership sayings are found by the thousands on the Internet, and they are used for many things including reinforcing the importance of behaviors like setting a good example, being consistent in what is said and done, living with integrity, and so on. Some examples include: “Actions speak louder than words.” “Walk the talk.” “Live by example.” “Act yourself into a new way of thinking.” “Do what you say.” “Practice the gospel at all times—if necessary, use words” (Ebner, & O’Connell, 2010). The common themes are that the message and behavior of the servant leader are vitally important, and additionally, they must both resonate with one another. The servant leader should make good use of the material available to him, but furthermore, he must implement it with consistency and integrity, in other words, “practice what you preach.”

Every leadership philosophy should have a metric to determine if it is doing what it claims to be able to do. The acquisition profession has people who test products in order to verify and validate a product before it goes into full rate production to prevent

wasting billions of dollars on a product that cannot perform as advertised. The requirements should be no different for testing the philosophy of servant-leadership. The test should answer the simple questions “Does it work the way it is supposed to work?” and “Does it do what the leader needs it to do?” These are fair questions and deserve answers before a leader acts on impulse and begins to change his entire leadership approach. Greenleaf (1977) offered this simple yet challenging metric: “Do those being served grow as persons; do they become healthier, wiser, freer, and more autonomous while being served?” In an effort to evaluate the effects of servant-leadership within the organization Greenleaf suggested walking around with more than a clipboard and a checklist. This metric, by which servant-leadership is measured, requires the leader to be involved in the lives of his workers in order to truly evaluate the effects that servant-leadership is producing within the organization.

Many people are hardwired to believe that this world really is about winning at all costs. This thinking has the potential to be detrimental inside organizations, and leaders would do well to remove this attitude from within their organizations. Servant leaders should feel accomplishment when those they serve have risen to achieve greater things than they have. Greenleaf firmly believed that service is the most unique aspect in setting servant-leadership apart from other models, but that does not mean that he was teaching people to disregard all previous leadership methods and principles when living as a servant leader. This unselfish attitude is not human nature and therefore cannot be expected to be implemented overnight; there typically are stumbling blocks. Shekari et al. (2012) wrote, “In this new organizational structure, the leader becomes the soft glue that holds the organization together as a virtual community working together.” This glue, they said, “is made up of a sense of common identity, linked to a common purpose and fed by an infectious energy and urgency.”

C. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

After an in-depth study of Greenleaf’s material, Spears (2003) compiled a list of ten characteristics of the servant leader, which he said were “of critical importance to the development of servant-leaders.” The characteristics are (a) listening, (b) empathy, (c)

healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) conceptualization, (g) foresight, (h) stewardship, (i) commitment to the growth of people, and (j) building community. Spears offered a disclaimer that the above list was by no means exhaustive. The ten characteristics above are a good indicator of the power and potential that servant-leadership is able to offer anyone who is willing to accept the challenge to change from their conventional philosophy of leadership. This next section draws heavily from *The Servant Leader Within*, a collection of Robert K. Greenleaf's essays that were compiled and edited by Beazley et al. in 2003.

1. Listening

The importance of listening to others cannot be overemphasized. Servant-leadership urges leaders to listen more and talk less. Greenleaf (1977) said: "Communication and decision-making are important skills, but the servant leader will reinforce these skills by a deep commitment to listen intently to others." While practicing the art of listening, the servant-leader is attempting to understand what the will of the group is and then helps to clarify that will. Greenleaf emphasized that the servant-leader seeks to listen openly to what is being said, and more importantly, what is not being said. According to Greenleaf, "Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's own inner voice and seeking to understand what one's body, spirit, and mind are communicating." In order for growth to occur in the life and career of the servant-leader, listening must be paired with habitual times of reflection (p. 17).

The purpose of communication is achieved only when the receiver receives the message fully and clearly and as the sender intended (Rane, 2011). Expressing desires, opinions, thoughts, and ideas are only half of the interpersonal communication equation. Listening constitutes the other half of the communication equation and completes the process. There is often an expectation that the receiver receives, understands and correctly interprets the message, then provides necessary feedback about the message before finally acting on it (Rane, 2011). After studying Greenleaf's servant-leadership, one can safely assume that he placed a heavy emphasis on listening. Greenleaf felt that the true servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first. When a leader

listens first, this disposition causes others to view that leader as a servant first and someone who cares. Greenleaf felt that leaders can become a natural servant through a long arduous discipline of learning to listen. Greenleaf (1970) said, “True listening builds strength in other people.” He said that this is possible by being so disciplined that listening becomes the natural response to any problem.

Listening first allows the strategic corporal to tap into his own innovative spirit. The natural reaction for most leaders when they hear a problem is to kick their brain into gear and come up with a solution. The problem with this method is that this does not allow the corporal to come up with his own solution. This will diminish his autonomy because he is constantly told what to do, and it is the anti-thesis to empowerment as he feels like he has no buy-in to the decision being made. Maxwell (2012) taught that “leaders listen, learn, and then lead.” Not all good decisions and ideas come from superiors.

Servant leaders should listen to everyone in the organization, not only those who are superior in rank, status, and position. This includes listening to the janitor who cleans the restrooms all the way up to the CEO, shareholders, and board members. There is a reason we have two ears and one mouth, and that is so we listen twice as much as we speak. Rane (2011) claimed, “It has been proved by many researchers that the success of a business essentially depends on promotion of good listening skills at all the levels in the organization.” Rane provided a summary of why it is important that the servant-leader practice good listening: (a) improves the managers ability to process information; (b) provides a suitable atmosphere for the employees to express themselves; (c) promotes understanding and coordination between various departments; (d) creates an open door policy; (e) contributes toward receiving constructive suggestions from the employees; and (f) contributes significantly to enhance knowledge on a continuous basis.

Ann McGee-Cooper and Associates is a consulting firm dedicated primarily to mentoring organizations in implementing servant-leadership. On their website (Mcgee-Cooper and associates, 2012), they provide eight practical tips for listening at a deeper level:

- When engaged in an emotional conversation that you have strong opinions about, consider active listening as important as presenting your ideas and opinions.
- Listen as much with your eyes (for body language) as you do with your ears.
- Listen as much for what is not being said as for what is being said.
- Listen to understand feelings as much as you do for facts.
- When communication is complex, summarize to make sure your interpretation is accurate.
- In conflict situations, stop “reloading” (rehearsing what you will say next) and listen carefully.
- Check out assumptions that you may be making as you listen.
- Don’t “cross examine” others while listening. If you need to clarify through asking questions, consider the spirit in which they are asked.

2. Empathy

The servant-leadership model requires leaders to walk a mile in the shoes of their group members. Leadership opportunities come in due time. Most of the time, people do not graduate from college and work as top management the next day. The process usually requires the person to begin lower in the organization and work his way up. Keeping this in mind, the servant-leadership model says that leaders need to remember where they came from and who they serve and empathize with others. Greenleaf (1977) explained that

People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirit. One assumes the good intentions of co-workers and colleagues and does not reject them as people, even while refusing to accept their behavior or performance. The most successful servant leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners. (p. 17)

In the past, empathy was considered inappropriate in the workplace or viewed as being soft. It was long considered a taboo or a sign of weakness, and now recent research is reversing that trend and re-introducing empathy as an essential leadership quality. Holt and Marques (2010) explained that empathy in leadership is appropriate, and that the issue needs to be taken seriously by anyone who wants to prevent further displays of unethical and oppressive business practices. Furthermore, they reminded that leadership

is an ongoing process just like anything else in life and that leadership models and leaders themselves are constantly evolving with the world around them. Leadership is a developmental process that involves systematic reflection, making choices, and dedication to constantly seeking purpose in one's life. Ciulla (2010) argued that leaders should be empathetic, but they should also exercise sensitivity, moral solidarity, commitment, concern, and physical presence, especially during or after crises. All leaders have an obligation to care about their workers, and this responsibility can be learned (and taught). Washington, Sutton, and Field (2006) conducted a study that examined the relationship between servant-leadership and the leader's values of empathy, integrity, competence, and agreeableness, and reported that "followers' ratings of leaders' servant-leadership were positively related to followers' ratings of leaders' values of empathy, integrity, and competence."

Empathy is a characteristic that is not always a first thought when it comes to verbalizing the items in a leadership toolbox. Senior Manager, Internet & eCommerce at Whirlpool Corporation, Ben Lichtenwalner (2008) offered three things to think about in order to help the leader grow in his duties as an empathetic servant leader. First, leaders should separate the person from their work. In the Marines, there is a disparaging feeling that "I am nothing more than a social security [to the Marines]." Servant leaders should try to destroy that myth and help each Marine understand he or she is more than a number; he or she is a person who has a life, feelings, wants, desires, goals, ambitions, and dreams. Lichtenwalner's second recommendation is to walk a mile in the shoes of the person they are leading. He explained that along with listening, the leader should strive to ensure he really understands each individual's perspective. The Marines combine all walks of life under one mission and vision. Within that melting pot, there are a variety of perspectives, opinions, and cultures that should be taken into consideration. No matter what the situation may be, the leader should take the time to look at it from the perspective of others, or he will never truly understand the nature of his Marine. Lichtenwalner's third recommendation was to be personable with appropriate individuals. He explained that some people are more personable and wear their hearts on their sleeves, while others are introverts. He recommended not pressuring those who may be

more reserved into divulging anything they do not wish to reveal. Servant leaders should maintain high expectations and ensure people are meeting projected timelines; however, when the opportunity arises, the leader should seize the opportunity to demonstrate empathy.

3. Healing

When conflict occurs within a relationship, the servant-leadership model claims that the unique characteristic of healing should be utilized to the maximum extent possible. Greenleaf (1977) wrote of healing relationships, “The healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for healing one’s self and one’s relationship to others.” Servant-leaders exhibit great concern for followers, as many have suffered from failed relationships and other emotional damages in the past. Greenleaf expressed that “although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to help make whole those with whom they come into contact.” In his exposition, *The Servant as Leader* (1977), Greenleaf expressed that “there is something subtly communicated to one who is being served and led of, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.” (p. 17).

A Marine who is not whole is not useful in combat. Marines suffer through a lot of heartache and pain throughout their career. They deploy to dangerous locations around the globe, which causes immense strain on the family unit. Many have endured the unfortunate situation of losing a brother or sister in combat, which causes emotional trauma. More recently studies show an increase in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which involves symptoms ranging from quick flashbacks to nightmares. Too many have had to look a man in the eyes and take his life, which is not something I wish to talk about any further. The point is this: Marines need healing. Healing happens when they bond and build relationships. Healing happens when the spouses of deployed Marines can comfort one another. Healing happens when the families of victims of fallen Marines can

console one another and help during the grieving process. Brokenness cannot be seen with a quick glance, but it can be observed by a leader who cares enough to be involved.

4. Awareness

There is something to be said about a leader who is aware of his operational environment and walks around with an open mind, an open heart, and open eyes. Greenleaf (1977) taught that “general awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant leader. Awareness helps one in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations for a more integrated, holistic position.” Greenleaf came to realize that awareness does not lend itself to complacency and peaceful rest, but rather it awakens the leader to his surroundings, which can be somewhat disturbing. Greenleaf said that “able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity” (p. 17)

According to this definition, awareness requires drawing attention to two separate but equal entities. The first is self-awareness, which in the Marine Corps is one of the eleven leadership principles, “know yourself and seek self-improvement” (Marine Leadership Principles, 2012). This suggests that the leader should make an honest evaluation of his own strengths and weaknesses in order to become more aware. A solid understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses and a comprehension of group behavior will help the leader determine the best way to handle most situations. The other entity is organizational awareness, which is addressing the issues and not trying to avoid them and hope they disappear. The idea is to be aware of the internal workings of the organization. Are there weaknesses that need to be addressed? Are the processes working properly? Is the organization aligned in their organizational mission, vision, and culture? The servant leader is aware of what is going on inside himself and in the environment in which he operates.

5. Persuasion

In general, there two ways to get a group member to comply, persuasion and coercion. The latter is not a recommended tactic in the servant-leadership model. Greenleaf (1977) wrote that servant-leaders should rely on

Persuasion, rather than one's positional authority, in making a decision within an organization. The servant leader seeks to convince others rather than coerce compliance. This particular element offers one of the clearest distinctions between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. (p. 17)

The servant-leader should strive to achieve unity and consensus among team members.

Persuasion is a unique characteristic of servant-leadership in that it disobeys the hierarchical model of top-down leadership where the leader leads based primarily on position or rank. The servant leader is looking to convince others rather than the opposite approach, which is to coerce others into obedience. The objectives of persuasion according to Miller (1980) are response-change, response-reinforcing, and response-shaping. Response-change is based on conflict, response-reinforcing calls for strengthening currently held convictions and making them more resistant to change. Similarly, response-shaping seeks to create or develop a behavior where no conviction is currently held and no resistance to the learning process is expected. The servant leader therefore involves those around him in the decision-making process and generates buy-in from employees. Shelby (1986) reminded leaders that every case is different; the audience, the situation, the goal, the message sender, and the channel all combine to drive persuasive choices. The unique interrelationships of these variables determine which messages will be effective and which will not.

To illustrate persuasion, Greenleaf referred to John Woolman, a young Quaker in 18th century America, who devoted 30 years of his life to convincing other Quakers that it was wrong to own slaves. By 1770, nearly 100 years before the Civil War, not a single Quaker on the American continent owned a slave. He simply traveled on horseback or on foot asking Quaker slave owners, "What does the owning of slaves do to you as a moral

person? What kind of institution are you handing over to your children?” Lawson (2006) speculated that “a few more people like that in the 1850s might have helped us avoid a bloody civil war.”

6. Conceptualization

The colloquialism that comes to mind is that the leader needs to see the whole forest and not just one tree in the forest. The ability to conceptualize is not something that comes naturally for all leaders. The ability to see the big picture takes time and experience. Conceptualization for most leaders

Is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional leader is consumed by the need to achieve short-term operational goals. The leader who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. (Beazley et al., p. 18).

Lawson (2006) further explained that conceptualization means the ability to dream great dreams. Similarly, Spears (2003) said it is the ability to think “beyond the day-to-day realities.”

The example Spears (2003) used to demonstrate this concept of servant-leadership is the board of trustees for an organization. He asserted that, rather than get involved in the day-to-day operations of an organization, the purpose of a board is to provide the visionary concepts for the organization. Ann McGee-Cooper and Associates (McGee-Cooper and associates, 2012) offered three suggestions to help cultivate the characteristic of conceptualization, as follows:

- Keep a journal. Write for fun as much as learning. Don’t let it become just another task on your check list, make it something enjoyable...Eventually your intuitive nature will emerge.
- Find a mentor whom you respect and consider to be wise and mature. Spend time with that person, ask good questions, and listen carefully.
- Go on a vision quest. The vision quest is an outward expression of an inward desire to grow.

Ann McGee-Cooper and Associates suggest that this consists of separation, solitude, seeking or listening to God, submitting to the word or sign that He gives you,

and service, which is when you bring the vision back to the people or organization. Lawson (2006) offered this advice from his past experience: “I personally think this should be a part of your daily quiet time.”

7. Foresight

Foresight is the function of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. A practical example might be that knowledge is what is gained from reading the technical manual for a computer, while wisdom comes from using the computer based on what was learned from the manual. Understanding is the ability to teach the next person who desires to use a computer for the first time. Greenleaf (1977) said it like this: “Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future.” Foresight is something that is deeply rooted in the natural mind, and Greenleaf advised that “foresight remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention.” Foresight, Greenleaf proposed, is the “lead that the leader has” (p. 18).

Daniel Kim from the Greenleaf Center for Servant-leadership believed that foresight is the central ethic of leadership. He said the leader must become good at the characteristic of foresight for the good of the organization. The Marines have a website called The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (<https://MCLL.usmc.mil>)¹, which is a place where major commands post the details concerning a recent event, and subsequently how the Marines (and enemy) reacted and consequently, what lessons were learned in the process. Since the beginning of 2001, the initiation of the most recent large scale conflict, many lives have been saved by the valuable information contributed to this site. From personal experience, I can attest to the fact that all major commands have access to and frequent the website in order to gather intelligence from other commands. The ability to have foresight is more than reading about current events, it is about what the leader does with that information.

¹ This website can only be accessed by authorized government personnel. It is not available for the general public.

Foresight is taking the information from past events and using it to benefit the organization. Keeping with the Marine example in this section, this would be like an artillery scout observer calling in a fire mission to engage an enemy sniper on top of a mosque. The observer could make the call to the Fire Direction Center (FDC), who cannot see the target, and they would prosecute the mission and blow up the mosque. Foresight is why the observer would not call for artillery, but rather would call an infantry squad instead. The observer would recognize the effects of blowing up that mosque. It is a religious center for the Muslim and would cause more political harm than good. He also would know that there is no need to blow up an entire building for one enemy. The impact of his calling artillery on the mosque would have negative consequences for all the Marines operating in the area. The local population would be upset with the U.S. military, many Muslims would be upset that the Americans blew up a mosque, and new stations would report this to the American public within the hour. His foresight would allow him to recognize that the secondary and tertiary effects of blowing up that Mosque were not worth the cost to do it. The decision to call the infantry squad to eliminate the enemy would allow for a relative peace to be temporarily maintained and also accomplish the observer's mission.

8. Stewardship

Everyone is a steward to some extent. There is one owner of a company; yet, he is a steward in the community in which he resides and to the employees for whom he provides. The Mayor is in charge of that community; yet, he is a steward in the state in which he resides and for his constituents; and the list goes on. Merriam-Webster.com defines stewardship this way: "the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care." Greenleaf (1977) explained that "servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others." Greenleaf 's (1977) "view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staffs, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society" (p. 19).

Stewardship reflects an ongoing sense of obligation or duty to others based on the intention to uphold the covenantal relationship (Hernandez, 2012). Hernandez thus proclaimed, “I therefore define stewardship as the extent to which an individual willingly subjugates his or her personal interests to act in protection of others’ long-term welfare.” Accordingly, stewardship behaviors are a type of prosocial action, intended to have a positive effect on other people (Penne, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). Hernandez added that, “because individuals need not hold a position of power or authority to have a covenantal relationship with the organization, stewardship behaviors can be enacted across all levels of the organization.” Davis, Schoorman, and Donaldson (1997) noted that personal power, which is developed outside of formal roles and over time, is more characteristic of stewardship than institutional power, which is derived from formal position in the organization. Servant leaders function as stewards who regard their followers as people who have been entrusted to them to be elevated to their better selves and to be what they are capable of becoming (Shekari et. al, 2012). Followers tend to respond well to servant leaders because they have proven themselves trustworthy as servants (Pekerti and Sendjaya, 2010).

Block has defined stewardship as “holding something in trust for another” (cf. Lawson, 2006). United States Marines are stewards of the American peoples’ trust. First and foremost, the Marines are entrusted to care for America’s men and women who volunteer to serve in the organization. Additionally, they are trusted to be America’s diplomats overseas and protect her interests in foreign affairs. Both conceptualization and foresight have to do with the servant leader looking out for the good of the people or the organization implying that there is a “responsibility on the part of the servant-leader to be a good steward of the authority entrusted to him or her” (Lawson, 2006). The Marines understand and appreciate the awesome responsibility they shoulder. The nation has entrusted them with the very freedoms they enjoy and implied in that is the granting of a considerable amount of power and authority when acting on behalf of the nation. They deploy overseas and leave wives, husbands, and children behind for six to 13 months at a time in order to protect the nation’s political interests. There is no need to question whether every Marine agrees with all the policies dictated from Washington because that

does not matter to him. What matters to the Marine is what they are taught beginning in boot camp and/or OCS: God, America, her citizens, and the Marine to their left and right. The Marines are committed to keeping America's trust and will literally lay their lives on the line to protect that honor.

9. Commitment to the Growth of People

Commitment to the growth of people is where, I argue, servant-leadership breaks away from the pack of other leadership models. The servant-leader's measure of effectiveness is not gauged by how well he is doing on a daily basis but rather how his team members are performing. As they grow, their performance increases; as their performance increases, the more effective the servant-leader is performing his duties. Greenleaf (1977) explained that "servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her organization" (p. 19).

Servant-leaders' motivation in accomplishing their tasks is not self-interest; rather, servant leaders want their subordinates to improve for their own good and view the development of followers as an end, in and of itself, not merely a means to reach the leader's or organization's goals (Shekari et. al, 2012). John C. Maxwell (2012) wrote, "Leaders accomplish their visions through personal growth and personnel growth." Focusing on individual development is fine, but doing something truly significant also involves empowering others to grow to their potential. "One is too small of a number to achieve greatness" (Maxwell, 2012). Krajewski wrote, "One of the most significant contributions to business failure is the inability to get things done through people" (cf. Maxwell, 2012). This included developing everyone in the organization, not just favorites. Maxwell (2012) said that servant leaders include the team in all major decisions and strategic planning because servant-leadership is a team approach. In all aspects of life, servant leaders practice this service orientation (Shekari et al., 2012). They instill in

followers the self-confidence and desire to become servant leaders themselves. Through this transformation of followers into servant leaders, a culture of servant-leadership can be created (Greenleaf, 1977).

As an important addendum, it must be noted that in normal military operations this goes beyond traditional training. Marines train because they have certain annual mental and physical standards they must meet. Growth of Marines means being intentional and taking training and engagement to the next level. Think about a working out in a gym. If a person can bench press two hundred pounds ten times with ease and he always racks the weights and never attempts the eleventh repetition, he has not gained anything from the workout. He may have sustained his fitness level, but he did not gain anything new from the workout. Muscles need to be stressed and pushed beyond what is easy or comfortable; it is the eleventh rep that counts when he thinks he can only perform ten repetitions. And if he does ten repetitions and never adds any weight he will never get stronger. So it is with Marines: they deserve a leader who will pour knowledge and wisdom into them. They deserve a leader who will challenge them physically beyond what is comfortable. They deserve a leader who will hold them accountable for their actions. They deserve a leader who will equip them to one day lead Marines when that time comes. Maxwell (2012) taught that when you lead followers you add, but when you develop leaders you multiply.

10. Building Community

Everyone belongs to a community and people are heavily influenced by the community in which they live and participate. When Greenleaf wrote his essay, *The Servant as Leader* in 1977, he was referring to the paradigm shift from small local businesses to large corporations. This is verified in his statement that

The servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. (p. 19)

The problem with the previous statement today is the type of community that many people are involved with in modern times. I suggest that people are more involved in their virtual Facebook communities than their own physical community. Greenleaf forecasted the era that we would fall away from intimate community and deep relationships, which is why he was adamant about the servant-leader performing CPR to resuscitate community and bring it back to life. Greenleaf was not saying that time should be reversed; he was saying that community can be created where servant-leadership exists. Greenleaf said that “Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created. All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his or her unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group” (p. 19).

Humans were meant to live in community with others. Lichtenwalner (2008) wrote that, “Communities cooperate and help each other to be better—to ensure the sum of the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.” Since the times of clans and tribes, humans have always desired the safety and fellowship of community. It is a place where people support one another and protect the interests of others. Communities are meant to be a place where people and families can grow and relationships are nurtured. Lawson (2006) shared that he believes community is “something that people crave. The popularity of the television show “Friends” was a testimony to the need that people have to live in community with one another. They want to hear someone say, “I’ll be there for you.”“

Building community does not need to be confined to the local community. Modern media has allowed boundaries to be extended beyond city blocks and even state lines as was the case in the following incident reported by the New York Times (2006). A group of three former students from Birmingham-Southern College in Alabama were convicted of arson for the crime of setting ablaze nine churches covering the span of four counties. The amazing part is how Dr. David Pollick, the former President of Birmingham-Southern College, reacted to the situation. Pollick said, “While the college did not feel responsible for the burnings, we did feel a deep responsibility for our

neighbors.” They subsequently raised \$368,000 to rebuild ten (one was a copycat crime) rural churches that were set on fire that year. The New York Times reported, “Donations ranged from \$5 to a \$150,000 check sent anonymously by a couple in Jackson Hole, Wyo.” The article continued that the couple wrote, “In Galatians 6:2, God’s word instructs us to ‘Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ,’” the couple wrote. “When we heard about the Alabama church burnings, we felt compelled to see how we could help.”

I argue that the Marine Corps would not be the organization it is today without strong leadership. Up to this point I have discussed several leadership philosophies and argued the claim that servant-leadership is the most appropriate leadership style for the Marines. In order to implement servant-leadership, the Marines must consider two salient components of leadership: trust and conflict. These two characteristics are necessary for any leader to address if they desire to be successful.

So, if servant-leadership is accepted to be the most appropriate way to lead Marines, what are the implications of more communication being done through email? In order to explore that, we have to understand that building trust and managing conflict are harder to accomplish via email. Given what we need to do in order to build trust and manage conflict, what can be done over email and what should transpire F2F? In the next two sections I discuss the implications of trying to build trust and manage conflict in the most appropriate manner by addressing both F2F and email in their appropriate context.

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III. LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION: BUILDING TRUST AND MANAGING CONFLICT

Leadership is done increasingly via email. In the past decade, the Marines have gone from a computer to person ratio of 1:5 to a ratio of nearly 1:1. In light of this fact, the Marines are increasingly using email as a leadership tool. They use it for a variety of functions on a daily basis; email is familiar to every Marine. Given that Marines are trained to be leaders and the increased use of email for leadership purposes, how do they develop trusting relationships with others? And, how do they teach Marines to manage conflict within the organization?

A. TRUST

“Trust is what defines the U.S. profession of arms,” declared Army General Martin Dempsey (2012), the top ranking military officer in the United States. In his address to ROTC cadets at Tuskegee University, he continued “If you sign up to become part of that profession, what you are doing is making a commitment that you will do your part to live up to that bond of trust.” That means one must always be willing to put others before self, be reliable in all situations, and they must care about this nation to the point of giving up their life to defend it.

Trust is a significant aspect of servant-leadership that is often skimmed over as if everyone already knows what it means to give and receive trust. Bibb and Kourdi (2007) emphasized that people write “about the importance of trust but we rarely focus on what it really means to us, and why we might try to understand and to develop it. Yet it is one of the core elements of any relationship.” Knowing whether one should trust a situation or another person has always been imperative to humans on a basic level because “misplaced trust can literally mean death” (Bibb & Kourdi, 2007).

Leaders should make every effort to build trust with everyone in the organization so far as it depends on them. This is a governing principle for military officers because they are asking young men and women to put their lives on the line. Freedom comes at a price; some refer to this as the ultimate price. No matter what one calls it, trust must be

established if Marines are going to pay that price. Leaders may, at some point, order their subordinates to carry out a mission that could result in death. An example is sending a platoon out into the streets of Fallujah, Iraq, after receiving intelligence reports indicating the presence of key insurgent leaders congregating in the area for a meeting. These leaders will travel with an entourage of insurgents who are willing to die if it means they have the opportunity to kill some American soldiers. The Marine Commander would seize this opportunity and send out a contingent of Marines to capture or kill the enemy (based on the mission requirement). This appears to be an extreme case for corporate America, but United States Marines must make decisions that are literally life or death. Trust, as previously stated, is ideal and preferably should be mutual. The leader should trust his subordinate to carry out the mission as directed and the subordinate should trust the leader has his best interest (and safety) in mind.

Building trusting relationships within an organization creates an atmosphere where workers feel free to express themselves and show off their talents. Trust creates meaning and connection, which give relationships the potential to be satisfying, safe, and creative (Bibb & Kourdi, 2007). The importance of creativity and innovation in the toolbox of the strategic corporal cannot be overemphasized. The strategic corporal is called upon to be creative in a dynamic and fluid combat environment where he must remain at least two steps ahead of his opponent (like a game of chess) if he is to accomplish the mission and return home safely with Marines. He has to be trusted to do this in the blink of an eye and oftentimes without his commander nearby. Amos (2010) wrote, “The spirit of innovation and fidelity form the foundation of our Corps. These timeless qualities enable Marines to respond and adapt, and are fundamental to how we approach warfighting.”

At the beginning of any relationship, both parties ask, “How is this going to benefit me?” People generally like to know what they are getting into. In order to properly study trust, there must be some incentive involved and the trustor should be conscience of the risk (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). One such incentive is identified by Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998) who taught that people are motivated by the level of dependence or reliance on the other person as that will have an

influence on the outcome of the actions taken by each party. Currall (1990) defined reliance as “behavior that allows one’s fate to be determined by another.” Dependence means that one’s outcomes are subject to the trustworthy or untrustworthy behavior of another person, and risk means that one may experience negative consequences from the other person’s untrustworthy behavior.

1. Trust Defined

Defining the intangible idea of trust has been a focus of numerous scholars because it is paramount in every organization from the Department of Defense to Google, Inc. Paliszkiewicz (2011) explained that “an abundance of research on trust can be found in the fields of philosophy, sociology, psychology, management, marketing, ergonomics, human-computer interaction, industrial psychology and electronic commerce.” Whether the discussion is about mutual trust or trust in general, one thing remains constant in all definitions: trust involves developing relationships with people.

Trust is commonly seen as dependent behavior between the trustee and the trustor (Mayer, Davis, & Shoorman, 1995). Mayer et al.’s definition of trust explicitly states that trust “is a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability to the actions of another individual (a trustee), based upon the expectation that the other will perform a specific action that is important to the trustor.” Simply stated, the trustee expects that he will not be taken advantage of by the trustor in a relationship that has a level of inherent vulnerability. Paliszkiewicz (2010) viewed trust as the belief that another party: (a) will not act in a way that is harmful to the trusting firm, (b) will act in such a way that it is beneficial to the trusting firm, (c) will act reliably, and (d) will behave or respond in a predictable and mutually acceptable manner.

When the tables are turned the trustor wants to maintain a mutually rewarding relationship with the trustee (Lindenberg, 2000) and he is looking for the relationship to last long-term. For this study, trust is defined as one’s willingness to be vulnerable to another group member’s actions. The implicit assumption in this definition is that trust is based on a certain level of confidence in the other party’s character and competence (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Zand, 1972).

2. Trust and Servant-leadership

The servant leader is concerned about people and building and maintaining trust is at the epicenter of any relationship. Stone et al., (2004) illuminated the point that servant-leadership is a person-oriented attitude that helps encourage an organizational culture for building safe and strong relationships. Similarly, Greenleaf (1998) wrote, “Leaders are greatly supported by their employees because they have committed themselves and are reliable. In this way an atmosphere is created that encourages followers to become the very best they can.” In an trusting environment, group members should feel that it is acceptable to make mistakes and they will not be ousted as a result. Harjinder et al. (2005) described trust as the “essential lubricant of successful working relationships.” Evan Wittenberg (2010), the head of global leadership development, Google, was asked the question in a Harvard Business School interview, “What is the biggest mistake a leader can make?” He replied matter-of-factly, “Betraying trust. It is something that is very valued in the relationship between leaders and everybody else. If you break that one, none of the rest of it is going to matter” (Harvard Business School, 2010).

3. Developing Trust

There appears to be a consensus among researchers that trust must be earned, and people cannot be simply sweet talked into trusting someone. Trust is arguably the only characteristic that must be earned, because it cannot be acquired any other way. Similarly, Bibb and Kourdi (2007) proclaimed that trust is a delicate and valuable commodity that is earned through actions, not words. Paliszkiewicz (2011) explained that in order to place trust in a potential partner, one must first establish his or her trustworthiness. She further advises that building trust in the workplace should be a desired goal for all employers. On the other hand, even as employers seek to attain this lofty goal, it should be noted that figuring out how to develop and maintain employees’ trust in the organization is no small task for any employer. It is a challenge that must be accepted wholeheartedly because building trust takes time and effort.

Paliszkiewicz (2011) claimed that for interpersonal trust to be built in long-term work relations, both individuals need to have their actions guided by a stable normative

frame. According to Six (2007), there are four operative conditions that play an essential role in stabilizing normative frames:

- The suspension of opportunistic behavior, or the removal of distrust;
- Exchange of positive relational signals;
- Avoiding negative relational signals (i.e., dealing with trouble);
- The stimulation of frame resonance, or the introduction of trust-enhancing organizational policies.

And if an organization's management wishes to promote interpersonal trust-building in the organization, Six (2007) offered a combination of three types of organizational policies that can be effective:

- Creating a culture in which relationships are important and in which showing care and concern for the other person's needs is valued (relationship-oriented culture);
- Normative control rather than bureaucratic control, because acting appropriately is the goal in normative control;
- Explicit socialization to make newcomers understand the values and principles of the organization and how "we do things around here."

When people have goals or objectives that depend on the input of others, their interdependency is considered high, and out of that interdependency arises a need to form trusting relationships. In Sweeney, Thompson, & Blanton (2009) interdependence model they predicted that leaders can earn subordinates' trust by fostering cooperative interdependence, being competent, demonstrating good character traits, and showing intentions to trust subordinates. Furthermore, they claimed that one significant precursor to trust is the "belief that this group member [trustee and trustor] has the competence to meet role expectations," which ultimately leads to one the group member being willing to place himself in a position of vulnerability by allowing his fate to be placed in another group member's hands. Sweeney et al. (2009) offered insight to consider when fostering trust, "[It] takes involvement,...is fragile,...is not simple," and something to contemplate when establishing trust is to remember that the slate is never wiped clean. In a practical sense this means that when a person has been hurt or mistreated in the past, they will tend to be more reluctant to give trust away freely.

In order for trust to be established and maintained between two people, there will have to be common ground from which they can begin this relationship. Certain characteristics should be encompassed by both the trustor and the trustee in order to produce an environment in which trust can be enabled. One thing that must be addressed is the slate being wiped clean. In order to establish trust, the trustor must be willing to give the trustee the benefit of the doubt and not hold past violations against this new person they are trying to form a relationship with. The slate must be clean for the new person because they are not the one who transgressed against the trustor. Nooteboom (2002) proposed that trustors look for two things in the behavior of trustees. First, they check whether the behavior shows the competence to perform according to expectations. Second, trustors look for signs in the behavior of trustees indicating whether the trustee is interested in maintaining the relationship in the future. These signs are called relational signals. Six et al. (2010) stressed that it is important for individuals wanting to build trust in their work relationship to regularly perform actions that can be perceived by the other as sending (unambiguously) positive relational signals. When a trustee performs the tasks required in a competent manner and meets deadlines, these actions can be perceived as sending positive relational signals. The actions themselves are largely task-oriented and provide information about the ability or competence aspect of trustworthiness. Mayer, Davis, and Shoorman (1995) found that propensity to trust is positively correlated with perceptions of others' trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, and integrity). There is also a set of actions that are predominantly relationship-oriented, for example, giving compliments, clarifying expectations and showing concern for others. The signals in these actions mostly provide information about the intention aspect of trustworthiness.

Concerning the trustee, research consistently indicates that “trustors are concerned about vulnerability associated with the potential loss from trusting” (Özer, Zhen, & Chen, 2011). To the extent that the trustee can inspire positive observations in the trustor, a trusting relationship is more likely to be established. Overall, all three of the above mentioned dimensions of trustworthiness (ability, benevolence, and integrity) on the part of the trustee have been found to contribute to one's trust in interpersonal referents (Fulmer & Gelfand, 2012). For the leader referent, to the extent that followers perceive

leaders to be high in competence, trust in leaders is more likely (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Specific leader behaviors that demonstrate competence, such as communicating a collective vision, also have been associated with higher levels of trust in leaders (Gillespie & Mann, 2004).

Trusting relationships are forged over time and continue to progress in direct correlation to the nature of the relationship. Porras (2004) wrote, “Trust is a dynamic process that evolves according to the development of the relationship.” Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) explained how trust builds along a continuum of hierarchical and successive stages, such that as trust grows to higher levels, it becomes stronger and more resilient and changes in character. Paliszkiewicz (2011) described Lewicki and Bunker’s (1996) model of trust as having three levels linked in a sequence where, once trust has been established at one level, it moves to the next level. Those levels of trust are calculus-based, knowledge-based, and identification-based.

Calculus-based trust occurs when an individual will carefully calculate how the other party is likely to behave in a given situation depending on the rewards for being trustworthy and the restraints against untrustworthy behavior. Over time, calculus-based trust can be built as individuals manage their reputation and assure the stability of their behavior by behaving consistently, meeting deadlines, and fulfilling promises they have made (Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003). Paliszkiewicz (2011) explained that knowledge-based trust develops over time in the permanent contact between participants; it is “grounded in the other’s predictability knowing the other sufficiently well so that the other’s behavior is anticipatable. Knowledge-based trust relies on information rather than deterrence” (Lewicki & Bunker 1996). As the group members come to a deeper understanding of each other through frequent interactions, they may become aware of shared values and goals. When trust evolves to the highest level, it is said to function as identification-based trust. At this stage, trust has been forged to the point that the parties have internalized each other’s desires and intentions. They understand what the other party really cares about and have internalized it to the point they act on behalf of the

other person. Trust at this advanced stage is also enhanced by a strong emotional bond between the parties, based on a sense of shared goals and values (Lewicki & Tomlinson, 2003).

In order to establish trust at high level, there are a series of signals (Six, 2008) given off by the both the trustee and the trustor. These signals can be interpreted as either positive or negative and will consequently affect the development and sustainment of trust over the course of time. Several trust researchers have shown or argued that relational signals play a critical role in interpersonal trust building (Bacharach & Gambetta, 2001; Bottom, Gibson, Daniels, & Murnighan, 2002). Several models in the past have attempted to account for these mindsets (Six, 2008) such as mixed motive situations (Schelling, 1960), social dilemmas (Komorita & Parks, 1995), social value orientation (McClintock, 1972), and the dual concerns model (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). Kelley and Thibaut's (1978) interdependence model of trust development identified that the level of trust in leader-subordinate relationships determines the amount of influence that subordinates and leaders would willingly accept from each other; more recently identified as implicit leadership theory (Schyns, 2011).

The basic concept behind any relationship is that it involves two willing people. Sweeney et al. (2009) stated that Kelley and Thibaut's (1978) interdependence model of trust development "stresses mutual trust, with trust developing through a reciprocating cycle...[which] acts to reduce the other's fear of exploitation and to show that the relationship will be rewarding." Mutual trust appears to be a precursor to the leader's ability to exercise influence in relationships with subordinates. Sweeney et al. (2009) declared that this influence is reciprocated and the goal is "subordinates will accept—beyond mere compliance—influence attempts from a leader they trust, and leaders will allow trusted subordinates to influence them." Several studies conclude that it is imperative to add influence as a result of mutual trust because it is evident that the level of mutual trust in a leader-subordinate relationship determines the amount of influence each party will willingly accept from the other (Zand, 1972).

The model selected to support this thesis is the relational signaling theory (RST), which explicitly links individual action and organizational conditions by stressing that human behavior is guided by the social rules within an organizational context (Witteck, 1999). Research has shown that for interpersonal trust to be possible in work relations, the trustee's behavior must not be guided by rational self-interest only; it must also be guided by the wish to enhance the wellbeing of the trustor (Lindenberg, 2000; Nooteboom, 2002). Such conditions include policies to instill regard for others, the correct interpretation of behavior in the light of this criterion, and the application of such competencies when trouble occurs (Six & Sorge, 2008).

4. Results of a Trusting Relationship

Decades of research have emphasized the dominant role of trust in organizations, which is a direct result of the positive effect it has when nurtured within organizations. On an individual level, trust has been linked to outcomes such as employee satisfaction (Edwards & Cable, 2009; Gulati & Sytch, 2007), effort and performance (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002; Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007), citizenship behavior (Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey, & Oke, 2011), collaboration and teamwork (Sargent & Waters, 2004; Simons & Peterson, 2000), and leadership effectiveness (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Marines are indoctrinated into an organizational culture that helps them understand the world is bigger than them and they are part of an organization that serves a greater cause. And this greater cause cannot be accomplished and protected if Marines are not willing to fight for the brother or sister to their right and left. This mindset does not happen overnight; it happens in due time and is the result of mutually beneficial trusting relationships.

Trust in a leader follower relationship results in a type of influence that results in subordinates doing what needs to be done because they want to do it instead of feeling like they have to do it. This influence is mutual in that subordinates will accept—beyond mere compliance—influence attempts from a leader they trust, and on the flip, side leaders will allow trusted subordinates to influence them (Sweeney et al., 2009). From experience, I can attest to the fact that Marines fight for the brother or sister to their left

and right because they have developed trusting relationships. These relationships inspire them to go beyond what they have to do and instead they offer to one another “the willingness...to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor...” (Mayer et al., 1995). General Amos (2010) reminded Marines of the motto *Semper Fidelis*, translated from Latin is “always faithful.” He explained that this is extended to each Marine and the nation. Furthermore, he said, it is more than words; *Semper Fidelis* is demonstrated by the “willingness to sacrifice ourselves for others and the mission, it is in our DNA!” This motto, he believes, is a direct result of building trusting relationships at the interpersonal level, which leads to trust in the organization as a whole.

5. Trust in a Digital World

The need for establishing and maintaining trust is as essential as ever, but the growing reality of changes in communication has, in many organizations, also changed the way in which trust is initiated. Organizational transformations are a direct result of the World Wide Web and other technology innovations of the past two decades. Sweeney, Thompson and Blanton (2009) encouraged scholars to consider two very important questions; “(a) how do military leaders develop trust with subordinates? And (b) how does subordinate trust in a leader relate to his or her ability to exercise influence?”

The dilemma of initiating trusting relationships is deeper than anticipated. To explain the root of the problem Mullen (2011) wrote that research by neuroscientists into the effects of early exposure to digital media has indicated that the neural networks within the brains of young people are being reconfigured from birth (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). Research using functional MRI (fMRI) scans show that “the neural networks in the brains of digital natives [those born in the past 20 years] differ dramatically from those of older generations, whose neural networks were established in an age when direct social interaction [F2F] was the norm” (Small & Vorgan, 2008). Mullen (2011) explained that in light of this new phenomenon produced by some of the neurobiological and psychological changes brought on by long-term exposure to

electronic media, it may be too much to ask organizations to force behavior changes on these digital natives, especially in high trust professions. What this means is the servant leader must change traditional thinking about how to initiate trust because the people he serves are literally wired differently. This new information does not need to be viewed as a problem per se, but rather a leadership challenge.

Research has shown that computer use replaces, rather than complements, time involved in F2F interactions. For every hour spent on a computer, traditional F2F interaction time drops by nearly 30 minutes (Nie & Hillygus, 2002). Email is good for some things, but there is a limit to how often it should be used in organizations. A possible result of using computer mediated communication (CMC) (i.e., email) is that it may increase one's tendency to misinterpret written communication and to overlook subtle, nonverbal messages (Mehrabian, 1968). Mullen (2011) warned of the consequences, based on an array of research that has suggested that an overreliance on CMC at the expense of F2F interaction may have enormous ramifications to the accuracy and quality of communication. Communication was defined by Harris and Moran (2001) as "the process by which persons share information, meanings, and feelings through the exchange of verbal and nonverbal messages."

Email and CMC are useful for dispensing basic administrative information (i.e., emails that have a signature line indicating, "Do not reply, this box is not monitored") where rich communication is required, ftf should be the preferred medium. The results from Mehrabian's 1968 study indicated that 55% of communication is nonverbal; that is, it is conveyed through facial expressions, hand gestures, body position, and so forth. In addition, 38% of communication is conveyed by the manner in which words are expressed, that is, tone of voice, loudness, inflection, and other factors. Only 7% of communication is conveyed via words (Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972). Virtually anything short of F2F interaction will result in missed opportunities to judge meaning and intent accurately.

Mullen (2011) described a disastrous consequence of an overreliance on CMC as possibly limiting a leader's capacity to influence others. Extensive research on interpersonal expectancy phenomena and media richness theory strongly suggests that

absent the rich, contextual interpersonal exchanges afforded at this point only by F2F interaction, one largely forfeits the opportunity to influence or mediate the behavior of others because of the loss of unintended nonverbal behavior (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1992; Bandura, 1986). As a result of an overreliance on CMC, the loss of one's interpersonal expectancy capacity—that is, the ability to subtly but significantly influence others' behavior nonverbally (Rosenthal, 1992) could lead to disastrous consequences for those who are in a profession that depends heavily on high-trust work relationships.

The reality is that trust is essential. Couple that with the fact that email and other text-based communication mediums are being used more and more each year, and this trend will only continue. So, how is trust established and maintained? Leaders would do well to understand that email can do some things, but not everything, and without the richness of social cues, trusting relationships cannot be established and maintained as effectively because there are fewer signals and more room for misinterpretation.

B. CONFLICT

Conflict is important to study because it is going to happen. The question is not a matter of if, but rather a matter of when conflict is going to happen. Leaders need to know how to handle conflict when it arises, recognize the difference between healthy and destructive conflict, and have in place a strategy to resolve conflict. Correspondingly, Deutsch (1993) wrote that “conflict is an inevitable feature of all social relations.” According to Deutsch, conflict can “take a constructive or destructive course; it can take the form of enlivening controversy or deadly quarrel.” The word conflict often carries with it a negative stigma, and in some, it instills fear and avoidance, while in others, it provokes competition and a win at all cost attitude (Kudonoo, Schroeder & Boysen-Rotelli, 2012). If the leader acknowledges up front that conflict is going to happen and has a strategy in place to minimize the damages then the potential gains can be magnified.

In the past two decades, researchers have shed new light on the subject of conflict. Early organizational conflict theorists suggested that conflict is detrimental to organizational functioning (Pondy, 1967; Brown, 1983) and focused most of their

attention on the causes and resolving conflict. More recently, many well-regarded scholars have theorized that conflict is beneficial under some circumstances (Tjosvold, 1991; Van de Vliert & De Dreu, 1994).

The Marine Corps is a good representative sample of the American population due to their non-biased recruiting efforts. Marines come from a wide variety of diverse backgrounds, socioeconomic status, race, and gender that allows for many different solutions to whatever problem they are solving. According to Kudonoo et al. (2012), conflict is unavoidable and common in social life especially in situations where people from diverse backgrounds with individual differences come together in organizations to achieve common goals. Learning to deal effectively with conflict and making it functional is a critical investment for good intrapersonal and interpersonal relations in organizations (Tjosvold, 2006) as well as for setting the tone for a positive climate and culture built for success. On the other hand, failure to develop an environment where healthy conflict is acceptable may result in a negative climate and become a road-block to success.

Low to moderate levels of conflict are identified as constructive or healthy, but on the opposite end of the spectrum, too much conflict can result in a less productive atmosphere. Kudonoo et al. (2012) warned that the outcomes of dysfunctional conflict can be destructive and costly to organizations. To illustrate this point, Jehn (1997) explained that based on his results the evidence revealed that an absence of conflict was associated with complacency about problems and decisions. As task-related arguments increased, members found that they were better able to critically assess information related to their job, and thus performance increased. On the other end of the spectrum is high levels of conflict and Jehn pointed out that this can be a hindrance to group performance. The acceptable amount of conflict is situation and organization-dependent on the group dynamics and the organizational culture. There needs to be careful consideration of both ends of the spectrum. Too much conflict and discussion can lead to less productivity because they cannot reach consensus on which direction to go with the project. At the other extreme, Van de Vliert and De Dreu (1994) suggested that too little task conflict can lead to inactivity because a sense of urgency is lacking. As previously

mentioned, there is not a standard right answer; however, Hollenbeck et al. (1998) advocated that low levels of conflict may be beneficial in achieving team outcomes.

The following excerpt from Kudonoo et al., (2012) provides a visual illustration of how healthy conflict can be a useful tool:

We propose that the vision needed in organizations is that conflict can be healthy when undertaken with the right intention and when implemented in a culture that values the positive aspects of conflict. Like the torch being lit at opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, a Clear Positive Vision of Conflict in Organizations alerts members of an organization that this is not “business as usual” but a space where the highest is called out of each employee. It also serves as a beacon to light the way in transforming the organizational culture to one that promotes healthy conflict. (p. 51)

Conflict is not a term that should send shivers down the spine of leaders for fear of organizational implosion. Nearly two decades ago Jehn (1994) developed an instrument that assessed two separate scopes of conflict: relationship conflict and task conflict. Relationship conflict is defined as “interpersonal incompatibilities...which typically includes tension, animosity and annoyance,” (Kudonoo et al., 2012) while task conflict represents disagreements about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions.

There is a black and white hierarchy in the Marines referred to as the chain-of-command and implied in that arrangement is the idea that one does not question his or her boss. Similarly, McShane and VonGlinow (2010) wrote of these autocratic organizations, “The perspective of conflict with one’s supervisor not only wastes productive time but also violates that hierarchy of command and questions the efficient assignment of authority.” Contradicting the point, Shweta and Srirang (2010) stated, “Broadly speaking, moderate levels of interpersonal conflicts are received as signs of healthy and dynamic work culture.” Where to draw the line of how much conflict is the right amount and when it becomes insubordination is dictated by the situation and mission.

Low levels of conflict in an autocratic organization will help leaders develop, mature, and gain experience. Dempsey said, “Military and civilian men and women, many of whom are extremely young and inexperienced find themselves thrust into

positions with high levels of responsibility, where their decisions can be subject to public attention and carry significant consequences.” These leaders need to solicit advice from their best advisors if they plan to make a well informed decision. Leaders in the DoD have a staff, and the staff’s job is to present information and make recommendations for the boss so that he can make a decision. The decision most often is based in part (or whole) on the recommendations of the staff that have done considerable research and developed several courses of action (COAs). I can attest to the fact that developing courses of action is a medium to high level conflict situation, but what comes out of those meetings is the best possible solution. Furthermore, the boss asks the hard questions, and the staff must present their opposing viewpoints and defend their COA against other groups and possibly against what the boss believes is the best solution. The Marine Corps Planning Process (MCP) is not something to be taken lightly. This form of healthy conflict is how Marines win wars.

Evidence has confirmed that conflict within teams improves decision quality and strategic planning, financial performance, and organizational growth (Bourgeois, 1985; Schweiger, Sandberg, & Rechner). Putnam (1994) showed that task conflict helps people identify and better understand the issues involved, and Baron (1991) provided evidence that task conflicts within groups encourages people to develop new ideas and approaches. Other research has looked at the influence of task conflict on overall group performance to include a longitudinal study by Fiol (1994) who demonstrated that when group members have different interpretations of task content issues the group’s learning and accurate assessment of the situation increased. This is consistent with the contingency approach, proposed by Van de Ven (1976), which states that conflict is more likely in interdependent groups and is necessary to process high levels of information and uncertainty that is associated with being in these groups. Van de Ven and Ferry (1980) identified that the task conflicts in interdependent units would help provide a clear understanding of goals, expectations, and behaviors, increase performance and also lessen the negative impact of the arguments on individuals’ reactions.

1. Conflict Defined

Conflict has been generally defined as professed incompatibilities by group members about a task or interpersonal incompatibilities. Similarly, Ting-Toomey (1994) explained conflict as the perceived or actual incompatibility of values, expectations, processes, or outcomes between two or more parties over substantive or relational issues. Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) defined conflict as a “state or condition that favors one group over others and occurs when the activities of one group are perceived as interfering with the outcomes or efforts of other groups.”

Pinkley (1990), in a multidimensional scaling analysis of disputants’ interpretations of conflict, discovered that people differentiate between task and relationship conflict. Wall and Nolan (1986) also differentiated between relationship-focused people conflicts and conflicts about the content of the task. Priem and Price (1991) characterized the two types of conflict as “cognitive task-related conflicts” and “social-emotional conflicts arising from interpersonal disagreements” not directly related to the task.

Interpersonal conflict in the workplace occurs when two people cannot see eye to eye. This type of conflict encompasses disagreements or differences of opinion between peers, followers, and supervisors. Relationship conflict exists when there are interpersonal incompatibilities among group members, which typically includes tension, animosity, and annoyance among members within a group (Jehn, 1997). Interpersonal conflicts may take the shape of task conflict when two or more group members disagree on their task issues (Rahim, 2002) and while trying to solve the issue they become aware that their emotions are making it exceedingly difficult to complete the mission.

Task conflict exists when there are disagreements among group members about the content of the tasks being performed, including differences in viewpoints, ideas, and opinions (Jehn, 1997). Putnam (1994) explained that task conflicts help people identify and better understand the issues involved, while Baron (1991) provided evidence that task conflicts within groups encourage people to develop new ideas and methods. Task related conflict is proven to improve performance when working on certain types of

projects. Kudonoo et al., (2012) noted that when the level of complexity of a project is high, “task conflict may improve performance by contributing to the team’s deeper deliberation and innovation.” To back this claim, Jehn (1995) and Amason and Schweiger (1996) established empirical support highlighting the fact that task conflict on highly complex projects is beneficial.

The effectiveness, negative or positive, of task-related conflict also depends on the team’s interdependence on one another. Van de Ven, Delbecq, and Koenig (1976) explained that task interdependence exists to the extent that group members rely on one another to perform and complete their individual tasks. Increased interaction and dependence among members causes conflict to have an intensified effect on individual and group outcomes (Schmidt & Kochan, 1972). The more each team member is dependent on the others to get things done and to come up with ideas, the more opportunities exist for the group to engage in conflict. This dependence can have a highly positive effect on the group’s outcomes. The more close-knit or tight the group is, the more they feel free to engage in healthy conflict with other members to come up with the best possible solution. Feedback and two-way conversations help improve the final product. This is an essential and healthy dynamic to have in a team working on a non-routine task. Van de Ven et al., (1976) defined non-routine tasks as tasks that “require problem solving, have few set procedures, and have a high degree of uncertainty.” Jehn (1997) explained that the open discussions and conflicts about task content promote critical evaluation of problems and decision options, a process crucial to the performance of non-routine tasks.

Within interdependent groups there is diversity. Diversity brings to the workplace a variety of attitudes, perceptions, and ideas, which can benefit the group. When dealing with non-routine tasks, teams benefit from the diversity in their group and can capitalize on the many ideas and perspectives from which they can develop the best possible solution. Janis (1982) explained that task conflict facilitates critical evaluation, which decreases the groupthink phenomenon by increasing thoughtful consideration of criticism and alternative solutions. In a low or no conflict environment where conflict is frowned upon or not practiced properly, that group may miss out on the opportunity to implement

or invent the most applicable solution. Janis (1982) warned that “thoughtless agreement and complacency...can have disastrous effects.”

There is, however, debate among researchers about whether or not task conflict is a interference in groups performing routine tasks because it interferes with efficient processing (Guzzo, 1986). Pondy (1967) issued a caution: “there is an optimal level of task conflict beyond or below which individual and group performance diminishes” (cf. Jehn, 1997). Brown (1983) stated that even though task conflict has positive effects, too much conflict can produce low-quality outcomes. Too much conflict has the ability to wear people out physically and mentally and often results in no outcomes. There is only so much each person can compromise before they feel tired and drained. Once again, there is no prescription for the perfect amount of conflict in the workplace as it is unique to every situation and organization.

2. Conflict and Servant-leadership

Servant leaders do not have control over whether or not conflict happens; however, they do have control over the organizational culture and climate in which it does happen. Kudonoo et al., (2012) advocated that how the organization perceives conflict is up to the leadership and, “it is the duty of management to initiate the process and set the tone for implementation by modeling the behavior they want to be exhibited in the organization.” If the leader allows for open discussions and healthy conflict, then those in the sphere of influence will likely do the same.

Leaders have the ability to establish group norms that help others understand what healthy conflict looks like and furthermore, how to deal with it when it does happen. Bettenhausen and Murnighan (1985) defined group norms as standards that regulate behavior among group members. The norms established by the leader and accepted by the group have a direct impact on how people in the work environment feel, act, and react to conflict. Servant-leadership involves being a sympathetic collaborator who can appreciate the views of others, while building teams, and managing conflict. Tjosvold (1991) wrote about openness norms (being open to discussion and debate) and claimed it encourages people to express their doubts, opinions, and uncertainties. On the same note,

Brett (1991) discussed effective discussion norms as he stated that a very important norm for a group to develop is tolerance of differing viewpoints. Jehn (1997) issued a warning about the flip side of group norms, “In contrast, groups may have norms about conflict that foster avoiding conflict and the perception that conflict is harmful (i.e., conflict should be avoided at all costs). This will nurture a culture of people who go with the flow and creativity can be severely inhibited.” Kudonoo et al., (2012) proposed that the vision needed in organizations is a vision that conflict can be healthy when undertaken in the correct spirit and with the right intention and when implemented in a culture that values the positive aspects of conflict.

Developing three hundred sixty degree relationships is a key tenet of servant-leadership and can reduce the likelihood of a conflict spiraling out of control. Merriam-Webster.com defines escalation as, “to increase in extent, volume, number, amount, intensity, or scope.” According to Rubin and colleagues (1994), escalation is a process of reciprocation. This implies that when two people are in conflict, when one makes an aggressive action, the other person will reciprocate with an equal or more aggressive action. This is what Rubin et al. (1994) called the spiral model, which is when things spiral out of control. Escalation is important to understand because when conflict escalates it “is intensified in ways that are sometimes exceedingly difficult to undo.” In regards to conflict escalation, Rubin et al. (1994) suggested that social bonds may dampen escalation dynamics. Instead of actions being viewed in the worst possible way, people are more tolerant and open to those they know well. Kudonoo et al., (2012) suggested taking relationships one step further down the hall by seeking cross-functional partnerships (e.g., if an employee works in accounting he would do well to build relationships with people working in marketing). Their theory is that this “is a solid way to build relational networks where social contact can be utilized to better facilitate strong relationships, increase understanding of others from varying business areas and increase the likelihood of healthy conflict over dysfunctional conflict in future conflicts” (Kudonoo et al., 2012).

The leaders who have a heart for developing others will have an impact on how conflict is perceived in an organization. Dempsey (2011) explained that there are three

levels of employees within any organization, junior, intermediate, and senior. At each level there are different wants and needs in order to satisfy their desires. Dempsey (2011) wrote,

At the most junior level you want inquisitiveness. At intermediate levels, it becomes adaptability, the ability to see things changing and react. Then at the more senior levels, you need to innovate the ability to see things changing before they begin to change, so you can get ahead of it. (p. 528)

In order to develop these attributes in others, there needs to be an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect. When there is respect for each other, commitment towards each other and the task at hand, an understanding of each other, sensitivity to each other's feelings and viewpoints, and a focus on productive disagreement around task, an atmosphere of transparent and healthy conflict is created (Kudonoo et al., 2012). It is in this organizational culture that the status quo is challenged, ideas are shared without consequence, and the most creative, innovative, and best ideas emerge. Dempsey (2011) concluded by saying, "What we want to do is see us as a crucible of leadership, a crucible of development; that the institution is committed to developing men and women as leaders for life."

3. Conflict in a Digital World

Millions of people around the world depend on email as a primary communication tool. The use of email is on the rise and is currently replacing more traditional mediums of communication, such as telephone and F2F communication. Email is unique in that it is referred to as asynchronous. Asynchronous means that two people are not co-located and that each person will read the other's email whenever they feel like, and subsequently will respond to the email when it is convenient for them. The outcome is not a true conversation in the traditional sense of the word, but rather a sequence of sporadic, one-way comments. Leaders are also using email to coordinate meetings, send out general information, schedule events, share calendars, follow up on F2F meetings, respond to complaints, and more recently to converse about conflicts.

Email can be useful in that it allows for time to think and react with the most appropriate response. Johnson (2002) explained that email exchanges take place in an

antisocial context (participants are isolated at their computers), allow new tactics (such as lengthy messages or communications that bundle multiple arguments together), and are characterized by reviewability and revisability (communicators are able to reread received messages and extensively shape their responses). Defined for practical purposes, reviewability means that once someone sends an email, there is a written document from which to read and re-read as often as necessary. Revisability is defined as the ability to write and re-write a statement or reply as many times as necessary before clicking the send button. Friedman and Currall (2003) predicted that slow feedback may prevent escalation. Because of the added time people have to respond, they may be able to calm down and carefully choose how they respond, avoiding making statements they may regret.

Daft and Lengel's (1986) theory of media richness qualified text-based communication (e.g., email) as "low" in richness on their hierarchy of media channels commonly available to managers. Media can be characterized as high or low in richness based on their capacity to facilitate shared meaning. Daft, Lengel and Trevino (1987) break media richness into four criteria for evaluation: (a) feedback allows questions to be asked and corrections to be made, (b) multiple cues are an array of cues that may be part of the message, including physical presence, voice inflection, body gestures, words, numbers, and graphic symbols, (c) language variety is the range of meaning that can be conveyed with language symbols, and (d) personal focus a message is conveyed more fully when personal feelings and emotions infuse the communication. Based on this theory, email remains in a position under F2F. F2F is considered the richest media because the feedback is nearly instantaneous. F2F also "allows the simultaneous communication of multiple cues...[and] uses high variety natural language and conveys emotion" (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Similarly, Nakamura et al. (1990) asserted that facial expressions are key to understanding emotional states, so that email leaves a receiver with only written statements to interpret the other's reaction.

Referred to by some as the “coward’s choice” (Ford, 2004), email enables unpleasant business to be dealt with at a distance. When this happens, people begin to experience anger, depression, and anxiety, and sometimes they feel personally attacked because they are not “worth the time” to engage with F2F. Ting-Toomey called this concept “losing face” (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Ting-Toomey’s face theory argued that face is an explanatory mechanism for different face work behaviors and conflict management styles. Face represents an individual’s claimed sense of positive image in the context of social interaction. In F2F communication, it is considerably easier to determine unintended miscommunication in the complex dynamics of an unpleasant conversation. When an email conversation has gone awry and people are upset and feel they have lost face, then the most appropriate medium is F2F where social cues can be interpreted and feedback is immediate.

Online collaboration tools are opening up new tactics and methods for conflict resolution. Ford (2004) suggests that organizations that approach conflict with any degree of consciousness appreciate that the use of email and the Internet need to be integrated into an overall approach to conflict management. Email allows for people, who are otherwise reserved and timid, to file grievances online, and the subsequent follow-up should be done via F2F. Johnson (2000) found that more information is shared up to four times more when comments are added anonymously over the Internet, rather than talking F2F. Online tools do appear to be the easiest way to file complaints, but many scholars agree that an effective conflict management program will use F2F supplemented with online tools as a comprehensive package. Ford (2004) wrote, “To the extent that people find it easier to file complaints using email or the Internet, an organization’s conflict management system should include both options.” Similarly, Ford concludes that collaborating “creates a culture that welcomes dissent and supports collaborative negotiation to resolve conflict at the lowest level...The focus is on the importance of blending interest-based options (such as mediation) with rights-based options (such as arbitration)...the logic of integration applies equally to the real and virtual worlds that organizations now inhabit.

Leaders should embrace how the Internet and email have changed the environment in which organizations operate. Email and other text-based communication are what the younger generations are now accustomed to using. That being said, the use of F2F communication should always be involved in any conflict resolution plan and therefore should be practiced whenever possible. Friedman and Currall (2003), who were previously quoted as writing, “[we] predict that slow feedback may prevent escalation,” admit that “our analysis suggests that email is not the preferred way to manage disputes, there are too many risks. If there is an option to walk down the hallway or make a phone call, that is generally recommended.” The truth of the matter is that the use of the Internet and email have, when partnered with F2F, fashioned many new and exciting opportunities (and challenges) for organizations and the future of organizational conflict. The future of conflict management “should aim to maximize all that the Internet and email have to offer as new access points, options, and support structures for enhancing the satisfaction of employers, employees, and the customers they serve” (Ford, 2004). One of the most important characteristics of leaders is to have an insight with which they can see what occurs in the group, organization, or society and diagnose the way it could be resolved (Nazari & Emami, 2012).

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IV. CONCLUSION: EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP OF MARINES IN A NEW WORLD

A. SERVANT LEADERSHIP IS THE IDEAL MODEL

1. Right Philosophy that Matches Marine Culture and Mission

The organizational culture of the Marine Corps is written in blood. The Marines have an organizational culture that is unparalleled by any other entity, whether in the DoD or in Corporate America; there is none like the Marine Corps. During my fifteen years in the Marine Corps I have heard on a many occasions, “I wish my organization could have the discipline, camaraderie, and pride that you all have.” Though this sounds like a reason to be puffed up with arrogance, it is actually a metric the Marines use to work harder to maintain that culture at all costs. Within the past two decades there has been a new enemy that has infiltrated into the Corps. This time it is not a terrorist strapped with a bomb, it is more internal. I am talking about the way in which Marines communicate with one another in this digital world.

The Marine Corps has slowly drifted away from using f2f communication in light of taking the easy way out and using email. Marines use email for just about everything now, to include managing conflict and relationships. This has caused a serious problem for the Corps and the result is that our culture is in jeopardy. Trust is not being cultivated in a timely and effective manner. It is not as easy for a young Marine leader like the strategic corporal to want to die for the mission his commander has tasked him with if he hardly knows the guy. The root cause of all this is that relationships are not being built before they are called upon to be an expeditionary force in readiness. Once the call comes in from higher headquarters that a unit must be recalled and prepared to deploy, it is too late for inaugurating meaningful relationships. It must be done intentionally and continuously over time.

I believe servant-leadership is the best model for the Marines to maintain their organizational culture. Servant-leadership is a stretch for the Marines at this point, but it can be done. It will take time and effort on the part of senior leadership. They need to

example servant-leadership first in order for junior leaders to truly understand the benefits of switching to this model. Currently they use a command-and-control method of leadership, which, consequently has worked in the past. This is not the case anymore. Times have changed, the battlefield has changed, and the Marine has changed. The digital natives are wired different and they do not respond as they once did to the, “do it because I told you to” mentality. If we want to communicate and lead them, we are going to have to change our approach. We need to begin the process with the top leadership and work our way to down.

Servant leadership ties together the mission of the Marine Corps, the organizational culture, the needs of the nations, and it serves the best interest of each Marine. The mission of the Marine Corps is satisfied by empowering a whole Marine who has a good moral compass, serves the needs of others, desires to grow both personally and professionally, and has a heart to give back to his community through volunteer opportunities. The organizational culture is maintained because all of these “whole” Marines take great pride in their organization. This pride is demonstrated and observed in the way they want to leave the Marine Corps better than they found it. The culture is also maintained by the way in which Marines gauge their own success based upon the quality of their Marines. The American people are better served because the servant-led Marine Corps prides itself on service. This entails more than serving the nation’s interest abroad and at home, but now it incorporates stewardship and building community. The Marines are to be stewards of the people’s trust; something they fight hard to retain. Furthermore, each base has a local community in which it resides. The communities will benefit from a Marine Corps that takes pride in serving the local community. Some would say that the Marine already give back quite a bit with all the volunteer work they do. To this I argue from experience that oftentimes young Marines are told they will volunteer; we call this volun-told. Imagine a Marine Corps whose leadership has ingrained in their heart how important it is to give back to the community and how important it is to build relationships with people outside in the local community. Imagine the impact of a volunteer force doing volunteer work because they want to and they consider it an honor. It can happen, and servant-leadership will help that materialize.

B. SERVANT LEADERSHIP SHOULD GOVERN COMMUNICATION

1. Choose Appropriate Medium for the Goal You Want to Achieve

The goal of the Marine Corps is to make Marines, win wars, and develop quality citizens (www.Marines.com). How we accomplish this has been considered throughout this thesis. I contend that if the Marines' goals are as listed above, then the best way to do that is through effective communication. There are several mediums that can be utilized in order to accomplish the abovementioned goals.

If the goal is to communicate technical or general information then using email may be the most appropriate medium. Email is a great way to send out calendar appointments and meetings or even to send a friendly reminder of a task completion deadline. Email can be used when there is general information from a meeting that should be shared. For example, when the boss comes back from a meeting with his boss and is kind enough to compile a quick list of tasks that need to be accomplished over the course of the next month. Email is good for passing along technical data that may require the recipient to read and re-read several times to fully comprehend. Email can be used when there needs to be a chain of correspondence with someone whom you have already developed a mutual relationship. Though there are some things that email is good for, there are also many times when email is not the most appropriate medium.

Email is not good for building trusting relationships. The research reviewed for this thesis indicated that trusting relationships can be established over an extended period of time using email; I do not argue that. I am concerned that Marines do not have an extended period of time to establish trusting relationships. The turnover rate in the Marines is extreme and there is no extra time to spend on email. They need to be able to trust one another with their lives. Marines oftentimes only have a few months after their first meeting before they have to deploy with this boss. An all too familiar example is when a Marine checks into a unit and they go to fight in combat six months later. Then upon return to the United States, many Marines are transferred; some stay, but most go to their next job. Email is not the best medium for establishing a trusting relationship in a job where relationships are instrumental and must be fostered immediately.

Email is not good for conflict management. Many emails with good intentions were blown out of proportion. In a study conducted by Kruger and Epley (2005), participants were told to send either serious or sarcastic email to other group members. While 80% of email senders thought their tone could be readily identified, recipients correctly identified the tone only 50% of the time. More alarming is that the recipients believed they could accurately interpret the sender's tone 90% of the time. This means that one of every two emails I will misinterpret the meaning after deliberating what the sender really meant. Furthermore, I need to understand that when I am the sender, I should consider very carefully what I am writing because there is only a 50% chance the recipient will interpret the message correctly. When misinterpretation occurs, oftentimes due to lack of nonverbal cues, the solution is to manage the conflict f2f. Managing conflict f2f is a dying art and it requires a lot of training, but it will be worth the time and effort to learn how to do it properly and it sends the right message. First, f2f tells the other person that you value them enough to take the time to address the issue in person. Second, f2f allows for nonverbal cues to be interpreted and then both parties can either agree or disagree, but the right message will be sent by both parties and a general understanding has emerged.

2. If Forced to Choose a Less Effective Medium, Understand its Constraints and Supplement Accordingly

There are times when there is no other choice but to choose a medium of communication other than the most appropriate. When this happens it is best to consider the possible outcomes before addressing the other party. Use the most rich medium available if the topic is sensitive and feelings are involved, or the message could be misinterpreted. If it is email, then be succinct and offer an apology for not being able to communicate in a more appropriate manner as this may diffuse the situation. The point is that we are not always able to use the most appropriate medium of communication. When this situation arises it is best to have a general understanding of what the constraints associate with each medium are. Study them early so you can use them effectively when the time comes.

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